NEW-YORK MIRROR,

A WEEKLY JOURNAL, DEVOTED TO LITERATURE AND THE FINE ARTS.

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FIVE DOLLARS A YEAR.] SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE OF PUBLICATION, NUMBER ONE BARCLAY-STREET, NEXT TO THE CORNER OF BROADWAY. [PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.

VOLUME SIXTEEN. NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1839. NUMBER FIFTY-TWO.

SPIRIT OF THE ENGLISH PRESS.

THE COAL-CARRIER.

BY W. H. HARRISON.

"I GIVE you just twenty-four hours to write me a tale. A tale of some kind I must have. I must school you into authorcraft, for by that you are to live. If you do not, therefore, accomplish this task in the time specified, you may seek another home." Such was the unfeeling speech of Lord Arnley, a nobleman of capricious temper, to his humble dependent, Charles Sevenetti. The youth, on hearing the mandate, was left alone in his little study, to consider of the bitter words which had just been uttered. He took up a quill, made it slowly into a pen, wrote his text on a sheet of paper, read it a dozen times, threw down his pen, and equipping himself for a walk, suddenly left the house.

Lord Arnley was a man of great wealth, although, when he entered into life, he had scarcely an income adequate to the most narrow support of his hereditary baronial dignity, and had he died at the age of twenty-one, he would have left behind him such a character as many an untried youth has bequeathed to posterity. "Economical, without meanness; generous, without prodigality; gay, without licentiousness; mild, without cowardice, with perhaps a lurking ambition which would probably have budded forth into great deeds." Such, and far more, might have been the eulogy of Lord Arnley, had he made his final exit from the stage of life, thirty-two years before the time at which our narrative commences.

But time, the great developer of humanity, rendered a somewhat different epitaph necessary. Lord Arnley had been brought up in the country, with such habits of moderation as suited his income; but, on mingling with the world, and having his eyes opened to the luxuries of life, he was smitten with an ineradicable love of splendour. This at length seemed to tire him, and he sought new pursuits. All, however, did not bring him happiness. Something apparently had occurred to distract him; but of this there were only mysterious surmises. When all had wearied him, he one day, about two years before the date of our story, read a little story which Charles Sevenetti, an inmate of his own house, and a dependent of his family, had written for the amusement of Lady Clara. From that moment he might be said to seize upon the mind of the youth with a strange and novel voracity, seeking to explore its inmost recesses, and continually taxing his own invention for subjects whereupon the unfortunate lad should exercise his talents.

Lord Arnley had, when very young, fixed his affections on a lady of singular beauty; she preferred another, and matrimony seemed, like all the other chances of his life, destined to enrich him. A wealthier, though perhaps less lovely and less beloved dame, sought him; he married her; she presented him with Lady Clara, and in three or four years afterwards he became a widower, in which state he remained. The fair sex, after his first attachment, never seemed to form a part of his passions; his parental love, however, was intense, which, with a wandering life, and his freaks upon Charles Sevenetti, had for the two last years in some measure occupied his mind. He had now got from the extreme south of England to almost its extreme north, and there we shall leave him, in order that the unfortunate Charles may tell his tale.

At ten next night, exactly thirty-six hours after the mandate had been issued, Charles Sevenetti descended to the library of Lord Arnley. He entered; his lordship raised his head from a volume which, probably, he was not reading; Lady Clara had the flushed look of hope fulfilled, and the happy protege, as the world termed him, cast down his eyes lest their expression should be remarked. His lordship tried to look benign, and beckoned to a seat. Charles continued standing, and said, "My lord, here is the tale; and such as it is, I have little share in it, excepting in the character of a mere narrator. Shall I have the honour of reading it, my lord?" "Assuredly; you know I never take the trouble to drag myself through manuscript." "I shall continue standing, if you please." "As you like," said Lord Arnley; "Clara, my love, it is time for you to withdraw." "May I not remain, papa?" I had rather not," was uttered imperatively. Charles was not sorry, for he felt that the story which chance had thrown in his way, and which, under the pressure of circumstances, he had been forced to avail himself of, was not suited for her ear. "Your eyes seem in the door," said Lord Arnley. Charles started, and instantly began.

"A student was one day labouring under a severe depression of spirits. His reason told him that his mind ought to be equal in various ways to remove the load which lay upon him, but reason urged him in vain. After struggling against many contending passions, perhaps I should rather say emotions, he darted into the open air, and bent his steps to one of the town suburbs. It was rather a genteel place, but yet its inhabitants were humane enough to permit a poor apple woman to erect her little stand in their close vicinity, and a few wretched coal-porters to find a sort of shelter from the blast, by placing themselves at the end of the last house of the row. When he reached these poor creatures, he stopt to examine the eight or nine grimed faces which were before him. A little brisk woman made two or three steps in advance, as if expecting his orders. A dark, gruff fellow asked where he should go to. A pair of females both started up, for some were sitting on the cold stones, and said, 'We gang thegither, and carry in a load for three pence.' 'For three pence!' said he emphatically; what will that do for two persons!' 'Get us our breakfast, and something ower.' Out of seven or eight men and women, all accosted him by word or movement, excepting an old man. This individual stood with his eyes fixed on the ground, his whole air bespeaking dejection but no anxiety. He was of the short, middle size, seemed to have been well formed, though perhaps never robust, and his features had in them a regularity and delicacy, which, even in his present condition might be termed elegant. Broken down as he appeared to be, it was impossible to guess at his age; he looked fifty-five, but he might be only fifty.

"The young man felt himself drawn towards this person as if by a magnet; his feet moved unbidden to the spot where he stood; he imagined him a man whose feelings might be as nice and acute as his own, between whose former and present situation there was, perhaps, as great a disparity as if *he* should one day be in the same state. Almost unconsciously he addressed him with, 'And so, my poor old man, you are still carrying coals!' The construction of the sentence implied a former acquaintance, and the man looked up as if he expected to see some one to whom he was not a stranger."

"The man answered, 'Yes, I carry coals, sir, when any one asks me.' 'You are not fortunate, then, in this way of life!' 'Fortunate!' said he, as if surprised at the term being in any way applied to him, and he added nothing more excepting a kind of laugh, which seemed to say, 'It is long since good fortune and I parted.' 'Come along with me,' said the student, and he led the way to what is called the town moor." Lord Arnley here looked up as if the story were disagreeable to him, and appeared inclined to interrupt it, but presently cast his eyes again on the volume which still lay before him. Charles proceeded. "'And what do you get for carrying in a load of coals!' 'Any thing you like,' replied the poor man, fixing his eyes on the face of the querist; 'but it seems strange that such as you should come on an errand like this.' 'Such as me!' said the youth, and he surveyed his dress, which chanced to be very plain. 'You may always know a gentleman by his voice,' said the poor man.

"The student did not decline the compliment, but, being still under the influence of a depressed spirit, he said, 'God knows, I may one day be as you are.' 'Impossible,' said the coal-carrier, 'for the same disease which would unfit you for better labours, would equally unfit you for this. Unless indeed derangement—a madman *may* carry coals.' 'And why, my poor man, are *you* in this situation? Your mind seems far more fitted for labour than your body.' The man sighed, looked hard in the face of the student, and said, 'May I ask if you really require my services in my poor calling?' 'No, I do not; but the fact is, I have this morning left my home, if such I may call my place of abode, in quest of materials for a tale.' 'You are an author, then?' 'I have no occupation—no profession—no trade—and, I fear, no capacity for the only resource which seems destined for me. I depend upon one (here the voice of Charles grew husky, and he almost repented of his boldness in introducing the sentiments which followed) who, in the language of the world, has been unprecedently kind to me; for the orphan of a domestick had no claims beyond sustenance and a mere trade. I certainly have been brought up—as—yes, I must say it—as a gentleman. But I had rather have been the free brat of a gipsey, than the sport of fit-and-start kindness. The student here checked himself all of a sudden, as if surprised at his own unwonted and uncalled-for openness, and to such an auditor. 'I will not,' said the man, 'profess to be honoured by your confidence, for you cannot intend to place any in such as I, but'—and he fixed his sunken though still fine eyes on the youth's face—'it is remarkable that there is betwixt my early condition and yours a certain similarity; and although I have never told the cause of my misery to any other than a priest, I shall in all *but* names tell you why I am thus. I am the son,' said the old coal-carrier, 'of a man who, thirty years ago, kept a respectable inn in the town of—I shall call it Bristol, but we lived more to the south. It was my misfortune to be endowed with a most singular beauty of countenance; no one—I speak of the immediate period at which my short history commences—no one ever saw me without stopping to inquire who and what I was. When in my fifth year, chance sent to our house—for it was not a hotel—Mr. C——, his lady, and little son, then about my own age. I unfortunately attracted the notice of this group; the boy declared he could not live without this pretty playfellow; and, finally, as he was an only child, heir to an immense property, and not much contradicted, my father was prevailed upon to part with me, under the promise, which was solemnly kept, that I should be well cared for. I was educated with, and like, my young master, until he went to Oxford, when it was deemed proper to separate us, and have me taught the routine of law business, so that I might be fit for the office of confidential secretary in the family. Just when young Mr. C—— came of age, his father died, leaving him sole heir to one of the first properties in England. His lady mother, though handsomely dowered, remained with us. I say us, for though I never ate with the family upon any occasion, yet in all else I was like one of themselves. In his twenty-third year, my master became attached to a young lady; she had no fortune, but as she had recently refused an earl, young and handsome, Mr. C—— was well assured that interest had no share in her choice. Indeed, who could look upon her and suppose that she had a quality in common with ordinary clay. She was'"——"Describe her at your peril," said Lord Arnly, breaking in on the relation, and flashing a look at Charles Sevenetti, which was not to be parried. He therefore cast his eyes to the next paragraph, and Lord Arnley bent his forehead upon his extended palms, as they lay before him on the table; nor did he again raise it until the coal-carrier's narrative ended. "'Within a year after their marriage, she presented him with a lovely boy, having the fair delicate skin of his mother, with the dark hair, black eyes, and high features, of his father. In six months after this happy event, which was celebrated as if joy were immutable, I saw that my lovely mistress was somewhat altered. She seemed languid; her eyes were dull; her dimples were less frequently in play, and the slight peach-like bloom of her cheek had disappeared. I have always observed that, in cases of alarm, excessive love runs into either of two extremes. His was the extreme of blindness; but when at last the paleness of her cheek was occasionally varied by the mark of consumption, the fatal red spot, and the lately dull eye shone forth with a new and alarming brightness, his solicitude was of the most agonizing sort. I need not dwell on what I can never forget; she sank by degrees; and before her head was laid in the grave, I had the misfortune to observe, that anxiety and unceasing vigilance had shaken the constitution of my master.

"I urged change of scene, and, accompanied by the young heir, and a suitable train of attendants, we set sail for a climate more adapted to a sinking frame. Mr. C—— lingered for some months, while he seemed completely divided between indifference to life on account of his irreparable loss, and an intense desire to protect his son. With a broken heart, he saw that his doom was fixed, and, committing his boy to my care, a charge which I never doubted to fulfil, he departed this life. We sailed for England. My charge was two years and a half old; I never lost sight of him for a moment; could he be otherwise than dear to me? Oh, human nature, thou frail thing! When almost touching our native shore, we were overtaken by a dreadful tempest; destruction at last became inevitable, and the vessel literally went to pieces. On the instant of certain danger, I had wrapped my unfortunate charge in a large sheet of silk oil-cloth, which had been used for some of the fine packages. As I stood upon the last raft, I could descry a portion of his own domains, and the abode of his next heir. For some time I was true to my trust. How shall I tell you the rest? The moment of mortal and of moral trial came. Had I encumbered myself with the boy, I *must* have perished. One only could be saved; at least I thought so, and in that I am now afraid I was in error.' Here the poor man's agony choked him. At last he went on with, 'I quitted my charge, and saved my own worthless life.' Again he paused, and then continued, 'I do not know why I have told you all this, or how it is that I am more than usually affected, for time scars in some measure the worst sores, and I abhor myself most when my anguish is least acute. I reached the shore, stunned, worn out, and, far worse, conscience-smitten. I abandoned myself to want and beggary, and sought, in all that was most foreign to my former delicate and luxurious habits, to find a kind of punishment for my great sin. I had seen in a newspaper an account of the shipwreck of the Ann, and a statement that every soul on board had perished. At last I became Catholick, and sought comfort in a rigid discharge of church discipline. But I thought the good priests I met with too sothing, when in general they sought to console me on the plea that at such a moment human nature could scarcely be expected to call its more noble qualities into action. Their lenity disappointed me, and I longed for some severe infliction. I wandered from place to place, and at last reached this town, where I understood that a stern priest exacted the last tribute to remorse. I laid my heart open to him. He said that my crime was of the deepest dye; that the weakness of human nature formed no excuse; that I had been actuated by the mere paltry love of life; and that, in the stimulant of some active passion, he could have beheld a better apology. I had forgotten the long, long debt of gratitude, the brotherly kindness, I had experienced from a superiour, and the very peculiar sacredness of my trust. 'To such a culprit,' said he, 'beggary is luxury. To want you must add labour of the meanest order, eat no bread but what you work for, and take no labour that is not offered.' The mandate suited the nature of my compunction; and hence, after a lapse of twenty long years, you see me in the most revolting employment I could devise.' Here, continued Charles, the coal-carrier's narrative ended. The curiosity of the student was whetted, and he resolved to quit his present abode next morning, and travel to the coast of ——." "The coast of what!" said Lord Arnley, starting up and fixing on his protege a look of ferocity; "the coast of what!" he repeated. Poor Charles had been strangely excited by the unexpected emotions aroused by his tale in Lord Arnley. The youth had only sought to make the story the vehicle for expressing his weariness of the life he led. But Lord Arnley's last and most fierce exclamations fairly overcome the spirit of the unhappy youth; his knees smote against each other, and he returned the desperate gaze of his patron with that unsteady wavering eye which bespeaks doubt and apprehension.

"They stood thus for some moments, perhaps minutes, during which time a rapid revolution seemed to take place in Lord Arnley's mind. 'Young man,' said he, with something like calmness, 'I cannot be blind to the conflict which you are enduring. I am not blind to it; but while I perceive a conflict, I cannot guess at what is actually passing through your mind. Go to rest. Come to me at eight to-morrow morning, and, in the meantime, while something good predominates in my heart, receive and follow an advice. Never be smitten by a love for the toys of life; you will find them as unsatisfactory, as unqualified to satisfy all that is rational in man, as are to a mountebank the bells which jingle round his ears. Would for the sake of mankind—for the credit of human nature—would that I stood alone! but a toy-loving nation must, unless renovated, come to that destruction which is now ready to overwhelm me."

Charles retired to his room, and threw himself, dressed as he was, upon his bed. His mind was disturbed to agony. His story, such as it was, had, from some unknown and mysterious cause, caused the father of Clara some painful emotions. "Was it not ungrateful," thought he, "to have alluded to Lord Arnley's fitful conduct towards himself? But, on the other hand, was an involuntary dependence to crush in him all that was manly? Is it a fear," said he, "that I shall be dismissed on the morrow, which thus shakes every

nerve of my frame? Such a fear shall no longer have any power over me. Have I, the son of a foreign domestick, picked up in a foreign land, any right even to look at Lady Clara, far less to think of her, and make her the loadstone which perpetually draws me back after my foot is on the very threshold to depart? This shall be no longer. To-morrow at nine I leave this house for ever." He accordingly wrote a letter of thanks to Lord Arnley for the support he had afforded him, with a brief and somewhat haughty apology for any occasional want of respect or appearance of ingratitude. This letter he resolved to deliver in person at a last short interview. After this he packed up his moveables, and then sought, though still dressed, a little repose. At eight next morning, which was exactly an hour sooner than his lordship's valet generally waited upon him, Charles entered Lord Arnley's room with the agitation of the evening before considerably augmented. He held in his hand what he deemed his last letter to the man who, though dispensing his bounty painfully, had yet given him a seat at his own board, with education, food and raiment. It was the depth of winter, and in a room well curtained with the deepest green, Charles could not fail to feel himself in almost utter darkness. There was a relief in this: he paused—listened for a word of recognition, next for a breathing—he heard neither. "He talked of opium," thought Charles; "it has produced, as is common, a late effect." He sat down by a window, glad of even a short respite from the fulfilment of his intention. Dark as it was, he imagined that, after a space, he might be able to see where Lady Clara's picture hung. He knew it was opposite to Lord Arnley's bed. "Surely," thought he, "I might discern the shining frame, and the white dress." No, all was black. At last he rose from his seat, walked on tiptoe, and put his hand upon the picture. It was covered with a piece of cloth. The circumstance was but a trifle, yet at that particular moment it seemed portentous.

Surprised at the silence and darkness, he opened a small part of a window-shutter, and saw that a table-cover had been thrown over the picture. Letting in more light, he saw upon a table by the bedside a large empty phial labelled "laudanum," and a letter sealed with black. It was directed to "George Clitheroe, Esq., hitherto known by the name of Charles Seventeth." He tore it open, and read as follows:—I am more guilty than the feeble-minded old man whom you met last night, and whose narrative related to *your* parents, and *your* supposed death. *I* was your mother's rejected lover; *I* was your father's heir. I hated him; and that hate, with my thirst for luxurious toys, led me to crime and misery. I have long led a life of suspicion and dread, and you have been its main object. Strange to say, I feared, from the very commencement of your story last night, that you had met the old man, the unfaithful servant who had left you to the waves, and the only person who could reveal your history, if he had known you. That old man I know well. I watched him long from fear; but at last I lost all dread on his account. But this is yet mysterious to you; it may soon be explained. By a most wonderful chance I picked you up on that fatal morning of your shipwreck. I had a retainer in Italy, who told me of all your father's movements, of his death, and of your sailing in the Ann. An anxious restlessness seized upon me. I was never distant from the shore. I had seen a vessel in the offing the night previous to the wreck, and, viewing her through my telescope, persuaded myself it was the same which bore the little person that stood betwixt myself and wealth to my heart's utmost desire. A tempest came on in the twilight; wrapped in a large cloak, I watched its progress through the night; the brig went to pieces, and—good God!—you were rolled to my very feet. Something told me—assured me—it was the child whose death I had almost half wished. The temptation was too strong. I walked some miles along the coast, till I arrived at a miserable hut, examined your clothes, and found that I was right. You had revived during the walk, smiled in my face, but I had nothing worse in me than to conceal you, and I resolved to care for your life. I easily imposed a tale on the peasant, left you in her care until I procured a horse, and, wrapping you up in my cloak, galloped to London. By a series of stratagems I contrived to bring you from Italy as the child of a servant who had previous to his death rendered me an essential service. This is all I need say—the subject is death—and the dread cup stands before me which will place me beyond your just resentment. Lady Clara and you love each other. Be happy, but conceal from her the guilt of her father; and let her think, as all but you will be inclined to think from the seeming happiness of my earthly fortunes, that my death was accidental. I have left her my injunction, as if of old date, to give her hand to you; and I know, for I have long read her eyes, that she will be but too happy to obey. Farewell."

Within a year after this event, the old coal-carrier was comfortably situated in a cottage near A—— hall, and tasted happiness which he had long ceased to hope for in life. We shall say no more, for from this the reader may guess the happiness that fell to the share of the other personages of our story.

THE FATHER OF PETER THE GREAT.

The Czar Alexei Michailovitsch, father of Peter the Great, was so much attached to the nobleman Artemin Matfeof, that, contrary to the etiquette of the Russian court, which forbids the czar to visit a subject, he would often go to his house in a friendly and familiar way. One evening, coming in unexpectedly, and seeing the table set for supper with great neatness, he said to Matfeof: "The table seems so neatly and prettily covered, I feel a strong desire to sit down to it with you. Yes, I will follow the suggestions of my appetite, and place myself at table by thee, upon this condition, however, that I disturb nobody, and that none get up from table till they have supped." "Whatever your majesty pleases and commands must be to the honour of my house," returned Matfeof. The supper was served up, and the czar sat down to table. The mistress of the house enters, with their only son, and a young lady, who, after making their profoundest reverences, obey the czar's commands, and take their places at the table. During the supper, the czar looked frequently round upon the little company, and seemed to take particular notice of the young lady that sat over against him, as not recollecting that he had ever seen her before as one of Matfeof's children. "I always thought," said his majesty, "that thou hadst no other child than that boy; but now I see, for the first time, that thou hast a daughter likewise—how camest thou never to mention her to me!"

"Your majesty thought perfectly right," answered Matfeof: "I have but that one son. But the young lady that sits opposite is the daughter of my friend and relation, the nobleman Kyrilla Narishkin, who lives in the country on his estate, whom my wife has taken into the house, to show her the city, and, in heaven's good time, to get her well provided for."

The czar said nothing more, than that "he had done a good deed, which therefore must be agreeable to God." After supper, when Matfeof's family were risen from table, and gone to their own apartment, the czar chose to continue sitting with his host. His majesty resumed the subject of the young lady, Natalia Kyrillovna, and said: "The maiden has a handsome appearance; she seems to have a good heart, and is not too young to be married. Thou must endeavor to get her a fit husband." "Yes," answered Matfeof;" "your majesty judges rightly of her; she possesses an excellent understanding, with the greatest modesty, and the best of hearts. My wife and the whole family are uncommonly fond of her, and consider her as if she were our darling daughter. But as to a suitor for her, that is what we are not soon likely to expect. She has indeed numberless good qualities, but little or no wealth; and if I should meet with an opportunity to settle her, the portion I could afford her out of my narrow fortune would be but small." The czar upon this replied: "She must find a sweetheart that has so much property himself as to stand in need of nothing from her, but consider her good qualities as the greatest and best of portions, and make it his endeavour to render her happy." "That is just what I could wish," said Matfeof; but where shall I find such a lover, who looks more for excellent qualities in his bride than for a splendid fortune!" "Oh, yes," said the czar, "they are still to be found very frequently; do thou think occasionally thereupon, and I myself will likewise look out for some such match. The maiden is deserving of all the pains we can take to make her happy." Matfeof thanked his majesty for so gracious an intimation of his kindness, and there the matter remained. The czar wished him a good night, and took himself away. A few days afterwards his majesty came again to Matfeof, discoursed with him for a couple of hours on state affairs, and, after getting up, seemingly with a design to take leave and go away, on a sudden took his chair, and sat down afresh. "Now, tell me," said he to Matfeof, "hast thou not forgot our late conversation about providing a lover for Natalia Kyrillovna!"

"No, most gracious sir," answered Matfeof; "I bear it continually in mind, and only wish it were to some effect. I have found nothing suitable for her yet, and I much doubt that a proper offer will soon be made; for though a number of our young noblemen come to visit me, and consequently often see my charming foster-daughter, they none of them give any intimation about marriage."

"Well," said the czar, "perhaps it may not be necessary. I told thee that I would myself use some endeavours to provide a bridegroom for her. I have had the good fortune to find one, with whom she will probably be contented and happy. I know the man; he is an honourable and worthy person, has merit, and wealth enough not to be under the necessity of asking an estate or portion with her. He loves her, and will marry and make her happy. Thou knowest him too, though probably he hath not hitherto discovered his intention to marry. I think, likewise, that when he applies to thee, thou wilt not give him a denial." Matfeof here interrupted the czar, by saying, "As I just told your majesty, that would be a most desirable thing; it would free me from a great concern I have continually at heart about this poor girl. Dare I now beseech your majesty to tell me the man's name! Perhaps I know him likewise, and can inform your majesty something of his circumstances."

"I have told thee that I know the man," returned the czar; "that he is a worthy, honest fellow, and capable of rendering his wife happy: this thou mayest take my word for. I can say no more of him, till we know whether Natalia Kyrillovna will be willing to have him."

"There is no doubt of that," returned Matfeof, "when she hears that your majesty has provided her a spouse. In the meantime, she must know who the person is, that she may give her answer. This I think is but reasonable."

"Well, then," said the czar, "I give thee to know that I myself am the man that hath resolved to marry her, if she be inclined to it. Do thou tell her this, and ask her whether she can approve of me."

At this unexpected declaration of the czar, Matfeof was filled with astonishment, threw himself at his feet and said, "I beseech your majesty, for the love of heaven, that you will change your resolution, or at least that you will not order me to acquaint the young lady with it. Most gracious sovereign, you know full well that I have already a great many enemies at court, and among the principal families of the empire, who are jealous of the favour and confidence your majesty is pleased to allow me. What an outcry will there be among them when they find your majesty has preferred a marriage with a poor maiden of my family to a connexion with one of the principal ladies at court! Doubtless their hatred and malice against me will cover all the land; and every one will think that I have abused your majesty's favour, and unworthily contrived to bring about the match, for the sake of raising myself still higher in your majesty's regard, and for elevating my family to a connexion with that of the czar's."

"All that will nothing signify," replied the czar: "the affair is mine, and thou hast no business with it. My resolution is taken, and thereby I shall remain."

"Well, be it according to your majesty's pleasure," said Matfeof; "and may heaven bless your majesty with every kind of prosperity! Since it is to be so, let me beg only one favour for myself and for Natalia Kyrillovna, which is, that your majesty will proceed in the matter according to the custom of the empire, and with as little noise as possible, by ordering a number of the marriageable young ladies of the principal families, and among them Natalia Kyrillovna, to appear together at court, with the design of choosing one of them for a bride; and, in the meantime, that no person besides your majesty and myself, not even Natalia Kyrillovna, have the slightest intimation of your purpose and resolution."

The czar found this procedure highly proper, and accordingly bade Matfeof be prepared for the event, and to discover his intention to no one. A few weeks afterwards, he declared his design of marrying again to the heads of the church and his chief ministers in a private council, and further told them that on such a court day all the marriageable daughters of the chief nobles were to be commanded to appear at court, that his majesty might consider them, and choose a bride.

This was accordingly done on a certain day in September, 1670, in the kremlin palace at Moscow, when sixty noble ladies presented themselves in their most superb attire, and among them Natalia Kyrillovna Narishkina in neat and pretty apparel. They were all sumptuously entertained by the czar; but Natalia was declared to be the monarch's bride.

INVOCATION OF THE EARTH TO MORNING.

Wake from thy azure ocean-bed,
  Oh! beautiful sister, Day!
Uplift thy gem-tiara'd head,
And, in thy vestal robes arrayed,
  Bid twilight's gloom give way!
Wake, dearest sister! the dark-brow'd night
Delayeth too long her drowsy flight.

Most glorious art thou, sister Day,
  Upon thy chariot throne,
While, sitting supreme in regal sway,
Thou holdest the high effulgent way,
  In majesty alone;
Till into thy cloud-pavilion'd home
In the burning west thy footsteps come.

When last thy parting look I caught,
  Which turn'd to smile good-night,
With all a lover's fondness fraught—
There seemed not in the universe aught
  So precious in thy sight,
As thy own dear earth, while to her breast,
She folded her slumbering babes to rest.

I hear the sparkling midnight spheres
  Rehearse the choral hymn,
Which yet, ere earth was stained with tears,
Burst on the joy-entranced ears
  Of holy seraphim:
While the lofty blue empyrean rang,
  As the morning stars together sang.

Oh, many a joyous mountain rill,
  And many a rustling stream,
Calm lake and glassy fountain still,
Tall grove and silent mist-clad hill,
  Long for thy coming beam!
Uprouse thee, then, fairest sister dear!
For all are pining thy voice to hear.

With trembling and impatient wing,
  My birds on every spray
Await, thy welcome, forth to sing
  With many a melting lay;
Then wherefore, beautiful, linger so long?
Earth sighs to greet thee with shout and song.

The sun-flow'r her vigil lone hath kept,
  With love's untiring care;
Though round her pinks and violets slept,
She wakefully hath watch'd and wept,
  Unto the dewy air;
And like a desolate bride she waits,
For the opening of her lover's gates.

Oh! then arise, fair sister, dear!
  Awake, beloved Day!
For many a silent trembling tear,
Falls on my breast like diamond clear,
  In grief for thy delay.
From the rosy bowers of the orient skies,
Then up, sweetest sister, arise, arise!

ROMANCE IN DEATH.

The last Natchez Free Trader tells the following story:—"On the seventh of the present month, Miss Mary Ann L. Barber, aged seventeen, and L. B. Young, aged twenty-three, both of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, were buried in one grave, after having departed this life under the following circumstances: Mr. Young was a high-minded, honourable young gentleman, most ardently and devotedly attached to Miss Barber, between whom and himself those promises and attentions had been interchanged which pledged them to the marriage union at no distant day. One in every sentiment, as well as in sympathy, they both, a few months since, made a profession of religion at the same altar and at the same time. On the day of their death, they had gone on a water excursion, with uncommon buoyancy and animation of spirits, along with four others, in a skiff, which suddenly overset and plunged them all in the water. The lover seized the one whom, of all others, he would save, and they both perished! They were found at the bottom, locked fast in each other's arms. With a solemn propriety, that embrace was never broken, and their bodies thus rest in one grave together, even as their spirits together passed into one heaven.

RENEE BORDEREAU.

Among many heroines produced by the civil war of La Vendee, Renee Bordereau, commonly called Langevin, holds a foremost place. She was born at a village near Angiers, of humble parents. Forty-two individuals of her family lost their lives in the revolution, and her father was butchered before her eyes. This determined her to take up arms herself. During the course of six years, she fought on foot and on horseback in more than two hundred battles, with the most determined intrepidity. Her uncle was at the head of a party of republicans. Instigated by rage and a zeal for royalty, she beheaded him. The republicans in the Vendean war were called the Blues. Langevin killed four Blues at St. Lambert, with her own hands. In the battle of Ponts de Cé, when she acted the part of a dragoon, she killed twenty-one of the enemy. Soon afterwards she liberated fifty priests at one time, and eight hundred at another, whose death had been determined on. A price of forty thousand francs was set on her head. She was thrown into prison for a crime, for which she could only prove her innocence by a discovery of her sex; she remained, however, five years in prison, where she was treated in the most shameful manner, and only obtained her freedom on the accession of Louis XVIII. to the throne. She has since had conferred on her the order of the Lily.

Obliging.—Some of the obliging folks at Lafayette steal their neighbours' cows, kill them, and sell the beef to the owners!

LITERARY ODDS AND ENDS.

Precocious talents.—The effects of study vary according to the age at which it is commenced; long-continued application kills the youthful energies. I have seen children full of spirit attacked by this literary mania beyond their years, and I have foreseen with grief the lot that awaited them—they commenced by being prodigies, and they ended by being stupid. The season of youth is consecrated to the exercise of the body, which strengthens it, and not to study, which debilitates and prevents its growth. Nature can never successfully carry on two rapid developments at the same time. When the growth of intellect is too prompt, its faculties are too early developed, and mental application is permitted proportioned to this development; the body receives no part of it, because the nerves cease to contribute to its energies; the victim becomes exhausted, and eventually dies of some insidious malady. The parents and guardians who require and encourage this forced application, treat their pupils as gardeners do their plants, who, in trying to produce the first rarities of the season, sacrifice some plants to force others to put forth fruit and flowers which are always of a shorter duration, and are inferiour in every respect to those which come to their maturity at a proper season.—*Tissot.*

Amusement versus drinking.—A singing and dancing people is certainly higher in the scale of morality than a sotting people. The national ballad and the national dance open the way to every department of poetry and of musick; when people have reached this point, it is easy to awaken the feeling for every kind and degree of art. The hundreds who resort to a museum cannot at the same time be sitting in an ale-house or a gin-shop. Nor is this all; they will soon come to feel the boundless disparity that exists between men whom art raises into demi-gods, and animals in human shape degraded by drunkenness below the level of brutes. It is an errour to suppose that christianity forbids the education of man by the forms, the influences, the conceptions of art: it forbids only those perversions and misapplications of art which the noble and the uncorrupted among the Greeks equally rejected.—*Raumer.*

Dutiful children.—"Our children are certainly the most dutiful in this town, Mrs. Frimble, though I say it myself," said Mrs. Complacency, one morning, to a neighbour. "Where are the little dears?" said Mrs. Frimble. "They are in the back-yard, and I will call them," replied Mrs. Complacency, opening the door at the same time. "John, William, Samuel, dears, come here this minute." "Go to thunder, you old fool; we guess we've a right to clime to this ere apple tree for all you."

Scene at a hotel breakfast-table.—Enter waiter, with a large shad. V. Z., representative from C., helps himself to one half. "Mr. C." says my next neighbour to his friend, "have you heard any cause assigned why all the shad taken in the Connecticut this season are poison?" "No, I haven't, although I was aware of the fact." V. Z.—shoving away the untouched shad—"Here, waiter, bring me a clean plate."

Tradition of ancient ship-building.—There is a Portuguese tradition that all East-India ships were formerly built without any iron used in their construction, for this reason: On the sea-coast of India there is a loadstone mountain; and when ships approach it, so strong is the attraction, that all iron substances fly like so many birds to the loadstone. Thus it became necessary to construct all India vessels without using even an iron spike.

Turkish jest.—One of his neighbours once went to Nasseredin, and solicited the loan of a rope. The Khodjah went into his house, and after a delay of several minutes returned, and told the borrower that the rope was in use tying up flour. "What do you mean?" said the neighbour: "how can a rope be used to bind up flour?" "A rope may be applied to any use," replied the Khodjah, "when I do not wish to lend it."

Walking upon water.—A Swedish fisherman has made several experiments, with complete success, of walking upon the water, which he does with as much ease as upon land, by means of slight tin shoes. These shoes are made in the shape of a small canoe, and are attached together, so that they can only be separated so far as to ensure the power of walking with ease.

Wellerisms.—"Don't rob yourself," as the farmer said to the lawyer, ven he called him hard names. "Terrible pressure in the money market," as the mouse said ven the keg of specie rolled over him. "Running a great risk for nothing," as the loafer said ven he picked the editor's pocket and found an iron tooth comb, and a piece of Tennessee poetry.

Advice.—The advice of a sagacious mother to her daughter, in some old novel, is said to have been—"Ann, my dear, you can never be pretty, so you had better be odd; and the editor of the Gazette thinks that a considerable portion of the modern belles have acted upon this advice."

Natural philosophy.—"Isaac, can you describe a bat?" "Yes, sir: he's a flying insect, about the size of a stopple: has India rubber wings, and a shoestring tail, he sees best with his eyes shut, and bites like the Old Harry."

What a monster.—The Chicago (Illinois) Democrat says:—"A plaintiff in a divorce case, complains loudly of the tardiness in the arrival of the late law altering the terms of the courts, as it has subjected him to the extreme cruelty of living six months longer with his wife than he intended."

Spirit.—Spirit is now a very fashionable word; to act with spirit, to speak with spirit, means only to act rashly, and to talk indiscreetly. An able man shows his spirit by gentle words and resolute actions; he is neither hot nor timid.

Retort.—A celebrated barrister one day examining a witness who foiled all his attempt at ridicule, by her ready and shrewd answers, at last exclaimed—"There is brass enough in your head, madam, to make a five-pail kettle." "And *sap* enough in *yours*, sir, to fill it," quickly retorted the untimidated witness.

Sleeping in church.—"I didn't like our minister's sermon last Sunday, said a deacon who had slept all sermon time, to a brother deacon. "Didn't like it, brother A.? Why, I saw you *nodding assent* to every proposition of the parson."

A stubborn author.—Bishop Berkley wrote a book proving the non-existence of matter. One night, when returning home from the printing-office with a proof-sheet, he broke his shins against *some matter*—but, alas, it could not break him of his theory.

Old proverb.—A Spanish proverb says, that the Jews ruin themselves at their passover, the Moors at their marriages, and the Christians in their lawsuits.

Pride of birth.—Catharine, Duchess of Buckingham, natural daughter of James the Second, by the Countess of Dorchester, was so proud of her birth, that she would never go to Versailles, because they would not give her the rank of princess of the blood. At Rome, whither she went two or three times to see her brother, she had a box at the opera distinguished like those of crowned heads. She not only regulated the ceremony of her own burial, and dressed up the waxen figure of herself for Westminster Abbey, but had shown the same insensible pride on the death of her only son, dressing his figure, and sending messages to her friends, that if they had a mind to see him lie in state, she would carry them in conveniently by the back door. She sent to the old Duchess of Marlborough to borrow the triumphal car that had carried the duke's body. Sarah, as mad and as proud as herself, sent her word, that "it had carried my Lord Marlborough, and should never be profaned by any other corpse." The Duchess of Buckingham, to mortify her, sent word, that "she had spoken to her undertaker, and he agreed to make a finer for twenty pounds." When very ill, she sent for Mr. Anstis, and settled all the ceremonial of her funeral, and, fearing she should die before all the pomp was sent home, said: "Why won't they send the canopy for me to see? let them send it, though all the tassels are not finished;" and made her attendants vow, that, if she should be senseless, they would not sit down in the room before she was dead.

Mr. Gardiner and Blackwood's magazine.—Mr. William Gardiner, the author of "Musick of Nature," whose lately published work, "Musick and Friends," was quite harshly reviewed in the Blackwood of last month, has come out with rather sensitive replies to that article in the Leicester and London papers. He, in conclusion of one of his letters, quotes from the advertisement of the American re-publishers of the Musick of Nature, these words:—"It would be difficult to name a work in the language, combining in so high a degree acute observation, philosophical analysis, and apt illustration," and says—"I feel the unsolicited commendation, or rather compliment, of my transatlantick eulogist, to be an abundant compensation for the splenetick effusion of a Scotch Tory Reviewer.

Special verdicts.—The verdicts rendered by jurors, are sometimes rather queer documents, as most lawyers have had means of knowing, but there was one returned by a Cattaraugus county (N.Y.) jury, recently, more laughable than any other that we ever heard or read of. It appears that three young men were tried in that county for shooting and mortally wounding a dog, and the written verdict of the "twelve good men and true," was in the following words, to wit:—"All three guilty; plaintiff's damages assessed at sixpence; and each of the defendants to have *another shot at the dog!*" Go it, Jerry. Darn the consequences.

The human voice.—The French papers have a good deal to say of M. Tabarie, who has discovered a process of reviving extinct human voices, by making their owners breathe condensed air. He is busily employed in restoring to the stage some celebrated singers, whose voices have absconded!

Tea.—An English paper says—"It has been discovered that some of the best black tea imported into this country from China, is grown in a climate much colder than that of England, and experiments are in consequence now making near Birmingham to introduce the cultivation in this country."

Elegant extracts.—"What, sir, have my client did! Nothing, sir—nothing. But there stand the man what have did the mischief. Him it were, sir, that with all the ferocity of a bloodhound, seized a shingle, and pursued his victim."

TO THE FAIR.

Ye are stars of the night—ye are gems of the morn,
Ye are dew drops, whose lustre illumines the thorn;
And rayless that night is, that morning unblest,
When no beam in your eye lights up peace in the breast;
And the sharp thorn of sorrow sinks deep in the heart,
Till the sweet lip of woman assuages the smart.
'Tis hers o'er the couch of misfortune to bend,
In fondness a lover, in firmness a friend,
And prosperity's hour, be it ever confest,
From woman receives both refinement and zest;
And adorn'd by the bays, or enwreath'd with the willow,
Her smiles is our meed, and her bosom our pillow.

A nobleman in retirement.—One of the dukedoms of Germany, containing an area of about ten miles, is held by the second son of the late duke. The eldest son and heir is a farmer in Warren county, Missouri, and refuses to leave a farm for a ducal crown with ten square miles full of subjects to maintain its dignity.

How to get up a fight.—"I say," said one urchin to another in the street the other day, "you'er the fellow what stole my marbles." "No I 'aint." "Then I am a liar, am I?" and without more ado he pitched right into him.

Cheap way of dressing well.—Brush your hat and boots well every morning, and never mind the holes in your elbows or inexpressibles. The ends justify the means.

G. t. t.—This is a return frequently made in the south-western states, on the writs in the hands of the sheriff, and is an abbreviation for "*gone to Texas.*"

A lady, piqued by Johnson's scrupulous advocacy of truth, once asserted that little variations in narrative must happen a thousand times a day, if one is not perpetually watching. "Well, madam," said Johnson, "and you *ought* to be perpetually watching. It is more from carelessness about truth than from intentional lying that there is so much falsehood in the world."

George the Second, being informed that an impudent printer was to be punished for having published a spurious (king's) speech, replied that he hoped the punishment would be of the mildest sort, because he had read both, and, as far as he understood either of them, he liked the spurious speech better than his own.

"I say Mister, what do you ask for them *keards* what takes a chap to the upper gallery," said a shrewd yankee to the man who sold tickets at the theatre. "Fifty cents, sir." "Well, I guess that is giving rather a *high* price to get into *low* company, 'aint it?" "No, sir, it is a *low* price for such *high* company, I should think!" said he of the tickets.

If one train of thinking be more desirable than another, it is that which regards the phenomena of nature with a constant reference to a Supreme intelligent Author. To have made this the ruling, the habitual sentiment of our minds, is to have laid the foundation of everything that is religious. The world from thenceforth becomes a temple, and life itself one continued act of adoration.

THE FAMILY CIRCLE.

The London Literary Gazette says:—"We cannot insert this pathetick lament for a lost child, in which nature and poetry are so finely combined, without expressing our deep personal regret that ever such an effusion was called forth—an effusion which will wring many a tear from the hearts of parents who have suffered a similar affliction."

CASA'S DIRGE.

BY W. D. MOIR, ESQ. (DELTA.)

Vainly for us the sunbeams shine;
Dimm'd is our joyous hearth;
Oh, Casa! dearer dust than thine
Ne'er mix'd with mother earth:
Thou wert our corner-stone of love,
The keystone of our fate;
Thou art not!—heaven scowls dark above,
And earth is desolate.

Ocean may rave with billows curl'd,
And moons may wax and wane,
And fresh flowers blossom, but this world
Shall not claim thee again!
Closed are the eyes, which bade rejoice
Our hearts, till love ran o'er;
Thy smiles are vanish'd, and thy voice
Is hushed for evermore!

Yes, thou art gone! our hearth's delight,
Our boy so fond and dear,
No more thy smiles to glad our sight,
No more thy songs to hear;
No more thy presence like the sun
To fill our home with joy;
Like lightning hath thy race been run,
As swift, as bright, fair boy!

Now winter with its snow departs,
The green leaves clothe the tree,
But summer gladdens not the hearts
That bleed and break for thee.
The young May weaves her flowery crown,
Her boughs in beauty wave;
They only shake their blossoms down
Upon thy silent grave!

Dear to our souls is every spot
Where thy small feet have trod;
Where odours, breath'd from Eden, float,
And sainted is the sod;
The wild bee, with its buglet fine,
The blackbird singing free,
Melt both thy mother's heart and mine—
They speak to us of thee!

Only in dreams thou comest now
From heaven's immortal shore,
A glory on that infant brow,
Which Death's pale signet bore;
Twas thy fond looks, 'twas thy fond lips,
That lent our joys their tone;
And life is shaded with eclipse,
Since thou from earth art gone!

Were thine the fond endearing ways,
That tenderest feelings prove;
A thousand miles to win our praise,
To claim and keep our love.
Fondness for us thrilled all thy veins;
And, Casa, can it be,
That naught of all the past remains,
Except these tears for thee?

Idly we watch thy form to trace,
In children in the street;
Vainly, in each familiar place,
We list thy pattering feet:
Then sudden o'er these fancies crush'd
Despair's black pinions wave;
We know that sound for ever hush'd—
We look upon thy grave!

Oh, heavenly child of mortal birth!
Our thoughts of thee arise,
Not as a denizen of earth,
But inmate of the skies:
To feel that life renewed is thine,
A soothing balm imparts;
We quaff as from Faith's cups divine,
And Sabbath fills our hearts.

Thou leanest where the fadeless wands
Of amaranth bend o'er;
Thy white wings brush the golden sands
Of heaven's refulgent shore.
Thy home is where the psalm and song
Of angels choir abroad,
And blessed spirits, all day long,
Bask in the eyes of God.

There chance and change are not; the soul
Quaffs bliss as from a sea,
And years, through endless ages, roll,
From sin and sorrow free;
There gush for aye fresh founts of joy,
New raptures to impart;
Oh! dare we call thee still *our* boy,
Who now a scraph art?

A little while—a little while—
Ah! long it cannot be!
And thou again on us will smile,
Where angels smile on thee.
How selfish is the worldly heart,
How sinful to deplore!
Oh! that we were where now thou art,
Not lost, but gone before!

He who thinks no man above him but for his virtue, none below him but for his vice, can never be obsequious or assuming in the the wrong place, but will frequently emulate men in stations below him, and pity those nominally over his head.

Many of the empty pots of an apothecary's shop are as gaudily decorated and neatly marked as those that are full, and the bottles that make the greatest show in the street are filled with a coloured useless fluid.

Some desire is necessary to keep life in motion; and he whose real wants are supplied must admit of fancy.

LINES,

Written under a portrait of a lady leaning on a balustrade by moonlight.

She stands beneath the evening skies,
Too fair to gaze on, save by night;
And thought is resting in those eyes,
That else were all too bright.

Her pale brow leans upon her hand,
White as a wreath of snow on snow;
And, casting off their silken band,
Her dark curls loosely flow.

O, lady! has the past so soon
Begun to claim thy secret tears;
Ere yet thy life has reach'd its noon
Is thine the grief of years?

Thy dreams are of the silent dead,
Of forms no longer by thy side,
Of looks and tones for ever fled,
Too joyous to abide!

And memory fondly seeks to trace—
Throwing on all a light divine—
The lines of each familiar face,
That once beamed love on thine.

The hopes that wither'd in their prime,
The fears that proved, alas, too true,
The shadows of departed time,
Are crowding on thy view.

The evening air is damp and chill,
The crescent moon has brighter grown,
Yet there, beloved, thou lingerest still,
Unconscious and alone.

Forgive the thought so idly vain,
But now I would not shrink to be
A follower in death's airy train,
So I were mourned by thee! H. S. L.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

THOUGHTS ON CONTEMPORANEOUS CRITICISM.

BY HENRY STANHOPE LEE.

"Were a great literary genius to set out early in life, and listen only to the voice of nature, what mighty things he might do! But every one is in youth shackled by the technical tyranny of those who have taken on themselves to dictate in the literary world."—*Sir Egerton Brydges.*

In this age of humbug, there is no system of imposture more successful than that practised by the reviews and critical journals of the day. In the republick of letters, as in all other republicks, it must be the voice of the majority which will eventually prevail—and yet, how often do we see a solemn prig of a critick launching about him his puny thunderbolts with the affected dignity and power of a Jupiter Tonans! As if he alone could dispose to authors their passports to immortality! As if his decisions were final and irrevocable!

Taste is a quality so volatile, impalpable and indefinable, that even in cases where criticism proceeds from minds the purest, the most impartial, discriminating, and eloquent—where he, who "censures freely," has himself "written well,"—the sentence, in nine cases out of ten, will be set aside by that only verdict to which an author should be amenable, popular opinion.

But modern criticism, especially that of Great Britain, appears to be biased wholly by personal or political considerations. The leading reviews of England and Scotland have, during the present century, been practising a most iniquitous system of deception upon the "reading publick." Controlled by cliques, literary or political, they have puffed their friends and punished their enemies, without the remotest view to critical honesty and independence. Look at the dashing extravagance, the splendid but unprincipled bullyism of Blackwood, which is read and admired in spite of its ruffianism and ribaldry. Who, of its readers, look for critical impartiality in its pages—a journal which denounced Coleridge as a dunce, Sir Humphrey Davy as a fool, Hazlitt as a blockhead, Barry Cornwall as an imbecile, Leigh Hunt as a stupid cockney, while in the same breath it would laud to the skies such writers as Pollock and Gault, Trollope and Kenyon! What influence upon the publick have they had—those fierce denunciations launched against Coleridge and Davy? None whatever. The publick have decided, and posterity will confirm the decision, that the one was a great poet and the other a great philosopher. And what has become of the tribe of "Little Unknowns," which the pious Christopher North would have foisted upon the publick as great men, "immortals?" Sunk, wilted, dwindled back into the obscurity from which they sprung. So much for the *ex-cathedra* judgments of pompous criticks, in contrast with the unbought, unprejudiced, and insubvertible decisions of popular estimation!

The Edinburgh Review, the Westminster, the London Quarterly, and Fraser's Magazine, are all quite as corrupt and venal as Blackwood in their critical *ipse dixits*. Their own geese are in their eyes much whiter and more beautiful than other people's swans. The Edinburgh praises Mr. Snooks as the best and greatest of men, and reviles Mr. Sniggs as the silliest and basest, because forsooth the one is a whig and the other a tory. The Westminster denounces Mr. Croker and apotheosizes Miss Martineau, because the one is an ultra monarchist and the other an Utopian radical. And so with the other journals we have named. Instead of being independent tribunals, they are merely the sordid and interested organs of coteries and factions. In politicks this partisanship is in a measure justifiable, but in literature it is unnecessary, dishonourable, and immeasurably disgusting.

"A man must serve his time to every trade
Save censure—criticks all are ready made.
Take hackney'd jokes from Miller, got by rote,
With just enough of learning to misquote;
A mind well skilled to forge or find a fau'lt;
A turn for punning, call it Attick salt;
To Jeffrey go, be silent and discreet,
His pay is just ten sterling pounds per sheet:
Fear not to lie, 'twill seem a sharper hit
Shrink not from blasphemy, 'twill pass for wit;
Care not for feeling—pass your proper jest,
And stand a critick, hated yet caress'd."

Criticism in our own country is at a sufficiently low ebb; but, bad as it is, it is not quite so corrupt as in England. Here it is *indiscriminate* puffery—with the English and Scotch reviewers it is *discriminate* puffery and denunciation—and in either case the bias is dishonest. And here I will go back to the opinion with which I started; that a literary *sentence*, proceeding even from a person the most conscientious, unprejudiced, and competent, should be received with distrust. How much more so then when we know the critick to be partial or unprincipled!

One of the most striking proofs and instances of the fallacy and frailty of critical opinions may be found in the case of young Ireland, the celebrated forger of the "Shakspeare papers." It appears that Ireland's father was a devout and almost fanatical admirer of the great dramatist. But I will let the young man tell his own story:—"I will not," he says, "take upon myself to determine whether nature ever gifted me with a dawning of talent for poetry, or whether I possessed a mere facility at imitation; but the reiterated eulogies rung in my ears respecting Shakspeare—my father's enthusiasm—and, above all, the incessant remark upon his part, that to possess even a signature of the bard, would make him the happiest of human beings—irrevocably sealed my destiny.

"Being in a conveyancer's office, and environed by old deeds, the silly idea struck me of investigating numerous bundles of law documents, in the hope that I might find some instrument signed by Shakspeare; which labour, of course, proving abortive, I had recourse to a dealer in old parchments, whose shop I frequented for weeks, under the same fallacious impression; when, finding all to no purpose, then it was, (as a German amalgamator of the horrifick would assert,) that the demon seized his opportunity to place temptation in my way. In fine, wearied by the fruitless toil, in an evil moment the idea first seized me of producing a spurious imitation of Shakspeare's autograph; when, without reflection, having supplied myself with a tracing of the poet's signature, I wrote a mortgage deed, imitating the law-hand of James the first, and affixed thereto the sign-manual of Shakspeare. The instrument in question was shown, accredited in all directions, and my father rendered happy; when, without a thought of anything further, I conceived myself amply recompensed in having been the instrument of producing so much felicity."

But it appears that the crowd of antiquaries and Shakspearian enthusiasts who surrounded young Ireland (he was only *seventeen* years old at the time) would not permit him to rest in peace. They insisted upon it that more of Shakspeare's writings could be discovered where the deed was found; and ultimately the poor boy was so beset and harassed, that, in self-defence, he announced the existence of a newly-discovered drama from the pen of Shakspeare! Prior to this announcement, he had, literally, never essayed his pen at poetical composition, and had not penned one line of the play which he purposed producing. Finally, on the second of April, 1796, (it should have been the first,) the tragedy of *Vortigern*, written by a boy of seventeen, was produced at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, as a newly-discovered drama of Shakspeare. Shortly afterwards it was published; whereupon some of the most redoubtable criticks and literary men of the day, including Dr. Parr, Mr. Boaden, and others of considerable account in their day, admitted at once that the internal evidence was sufficient to stamp it as the composition of the immortal Shakspeare! Boaden said the reading of the precious manuscripts produced "a tremour of the purest delight;" such persuasion of their excellence being retained for months, "making all scepticism ridiculous." Old Parr was equally enthusiastick in his admiration.

Now, the play of *Vortigern* is about as much like Shakspeare as the drone of a bagpipe is like the musick of the spheres. It is precisely such a work as we should think a clever lad, with good imitative talents, might produce. Take the following song—a capital specimen of what are called "nonsense verses," where the sound deceives an inattentive observer with the idea that the sense is all correct:

Flavia sings.

She sang, while from her eye ran down
The silv'ry drop of sorrow;
From grief she stole away the crown,
Sweet patience, too, did borrow.
Pensive she sat while fortune frown'd,
And smiling woo'd sad melancholy.

Keen anguish fain would turn her heart,
And sour her gentle mind;
But charity still kept her part,
And meekness to her soul did bind.
She bow'd content,
Heav'd forth one sigh,
Sang, wept, then turned to melancholy.

Careless her locks around her hung,
And strove to catch each dewy tear;
The plaintive bird in pity sung,
And breathed his sorrow in her ear.
Amazed she look'd,
And thank'd his care,
Then sunk once more to melancholy.

Could there be anything more innocent of meaning or of poetry? Take another extract. The following is from the opening scene of the first act of *Vortigern*. Imagine, if you can, that any one in his senses ever believed it to be Shakspeare's:

Constantius—Good Vortigern! as peace doth bless our isle,
And the loud din of war no more affrights us,
And as my soul has placed thee next herself,
'Tis our desire that thou deny'st us not
That which anon we crave thee to accept;
For though most weighty be the proffer'd task,
We trust thy goodness will the toil accept,
Since we have always found thee kind by nature;
And, as the pelican, e'en with thy blood,
Ready to succour and relieve.

Vortigern—Most gracious sov'reign! to command is thine;
And, as a subject, mine is to obey.

Con.—Such was the answer we did here expect,
And farther now we shall explain our meaning.
As frozen age we find doth fast approach,
And state affairs lie heavy with ourself,
To thee one half our power we here resign,
That due reward may pace with thy great labour.
To this our proposition what reply!

Vor.—Oh! my most noble, good and bounteous lord,
These honours are indeed so great, so weighty,
I fear, least, like a garment too confined,
They awkwardly should press upon the wearer;
Therefore, my gracious lord, let one more worthy,
I do beseech thee, bear them.

Con.—Nay, nay! this thy excuse will not suffice—
E'en now we do await thy full consent;
And, that more speedily we may conclude,
We do require of thee, thou here shouldst sign
This deed prepar'd, by which thou wilt become,
Ourself cojoin'd, sov'reign of this our realm.

Vor.—I shall, my lord, obey your high command.

And so forth, through five insupportably tedious acts! What bigotry or hallucination could have induced Parr and his fellow dupes to fall in raptures with such stuff as coming from Shakspeare! And yet Parr and Boaden were men of erudition, and great criticks in their day! They both lived, however, to persecute and denounce young Ireland with savage virulence after he had confessed the hoax. So much for contemporaneous criticism!

Imagine "Hamlet" to have been produced for the first time immediately after the appearance of this "newly-discovered play of Shakspeare," and imagine it to have been put forth as the production of Mr. Timothy Tibbs. What a parallel, to the disparagement of Hamlet and the glorification of Vortigern, should we have had from our sapient criticks! What senseless balderdash would the scene between the young prince and the "old boy in the cellerage" have been! What drawling nonsense compared with the fire and spirit of the opening dialogue between Constantius and Vortigern! Alas for the fallibility of our poor human judgments! If I ever write a book, (and I mean to, one of these days,) I am resolved I will snap my fingers in the faces of Messieurs the criticks, and write, write, egad! to please myself and the publick telling the snarleyows of the press to bark till their throats are sore; and bearing in mind the consoling reflection of Swift, that, "when a true genius appears in the world, you may know him by this sign—the dunces are all in confederacy against him."

LETTERS FROM THE SOUTH.

South Carolina, May 25th, 1839.

My dear sir—We are packing up for the city, and will leave our woodland home, our dense forests and broad fields, now green with every variety of vine, fruit and foliage, on Monday next. The season is approaching when the rank vegetation of our swamps becomes fatal to European and Atlantick life; and we natives of the seaboard find it a timely precaution to depart before the middle of June. I have remained in our swamps till the middle of July, without apprehension and without suffering harm; but where we have the lives of women and children depending upon us, such a delay might prove dangerous if not fatal, and would certainly be wanton. Both of our plantations, which lie in different but parallel districts of the state, are on rivers. The two Edistoes, or rather the two forks or branches of the parent trunk, run along beside our lands, at a distance of twelve miles—an easy ride of three hours—asunder. This stream is one of the boldest and deepest, though narrow, in our state. We receive from it abundant supplies of fish in the proper season; trout, rock, perch, beam and cat; the latter is accounted among us one of the most exquisite. The meat is whiter than snow, remarkably delicate and tender, without bones, and of superiour flavour; one of them, more than two feet in length, graced our table a few days ago; they are chiefly caught in traps. At this time our woods present an appearance the most lovely and inviting. Of their density, depth, darkness and variety of green—their odours, which reach you at the distance of miles and envelop you, as it were, in clouds of perfume—you can form no idea. The wild grape, of every sort and flavour, hangs around us at every step we take, growing without care or cultivation in every swamp and thicket, rising to the tops of the loftiest trees, and linking them together by festoons of the most glowing and velvety green. Plums, peaches, pears and apples; strawberries, blackberries, raspberries and cherries; many apples, etc.; all these we are about to leave to our negroes. Those poor devils, whom you northern abolitionists so greatly pity, will have, for the gathering, constantly within their reach, dainties which you and I would purchase with difficulty and at a great price in New-York and Charleston markets. Add to this the fish which they get from the streams, the game which they encounter in the fields—(and, *par parenthese*, there are five negroes on our woodland plantations—*slaves*—who each keep their guns in their own possession)—and in their walks the opossums, which are

taken nightly by the dogs by the dozen, and which a negro prefers to any pigs; the racoons, the squirrels, the wild turkeys, duck and deer; and you may form some idea of what we leave behind us. Nor do the cruel owners of the slave defer him to the natural produce of the woods for his support. Mr. ——, a near friend, plants about four hundred acres of corn, about ten of rice, ten of wheat, ten of potatoes, ten of rye, etc., none of which are sold, and all kept for plantation consumption. To these add the slaughter of about sixty head of hogs and ten steers anually, and you will have some idea of the lean providence of that grinding southern cultivator, who is so great a monster of cupidity in the estimation of modern anti-slave philanthropy.

PARISIAN NOVELTIES.

Paris, May 6.

The king's fête was commencing when I wrote last. The weather was fine, and the crowd exceedingly great. The day passed off with the utmost tranquillity; with the exception of two or three accidents, nothing occurred to mar the festivity of the occasion. Yet I must declare that I could perceive a vast difference between the demeanour of the people this year and on preceding birth-days. There was a lack of that heart-inspiring gaiety which prompts the Parisian population to fling care to the winds, and be happy at least for one day in the year. The general appearance of the crowd was heavy, and they seemed to care but little for the amusements prepared for them. At the palace, too, the visits were sad affairs, every one appearing out of spirits. In the evening at the concert before the Tuileries, the Marseillaire was encored. The illuminations were altogether official—I did not perceive a single private house with a lampion. The exhibition of the products of French industry was the great circumstance of the day. I have already spoken of the king's private visit there. Everything appeared exactly in the same position when the crowd were permitted to enter. There are four large rooms, and two small ones, each appropriated to its own peculiar articles. The building is marked by considerable grandeur of appearance, but the whole is not yet completed externally and some of the scaffolding still remains up. As to the character of the articles exhibited, it is complained that there are too many useless matters in the collection, even mere playthings. The whole number of articles exposed to view amounts to forty-three thousand.

The ministry still remains in *statu quo*. Bets are now made that none will be formed within the month. The Dukes of Orleans and Nemours are here at present. They were both this week at the races in the Champ-de-Mars. Lord H. Seymour has again been unsuccessful this year, as not one of his horses have won. Margarita and Francesca, both entered in the name of the Comte de Cambis, won the two great prizes with great ease.

Next to the formation of the ministry, the chief subject of discussion here is the suicide of Souillard, one of the men lately convicted of a dreadful murder in the Rue du Temple. This man had, for the ten days the trial lasted, preserved great firmness and presence of mind; it was when brought up to hear his fate that he swallowed a dose of arsenick, sufficient, it is said, to kill a hundred men. He was observed, whilst standing at the bar, to keep his handkerchief to his mouth, and when the judgment was declared, he seemed anxious to speak. He was apparently unable to do so, and he was led away without having uttered any remark. In passing through the court of the prison, he asked for a glass of water, which he swallowed at a draught. This hastened the effects of the poison, and in a few minutes he fell down in dreadful agony. Medical assistance was sent for, and emeticks administered, but all in vain; he died next morning in violent convulsions. The most extraordinary part of this strange affair is the concealment of the poison for so many days, as the prisoners are subjected to most minute examination. It is said that the poison was curiously fixed in the folds of his cravat.

The great subject of conversation during the week has been Mdlle. Rachel's appearance in comedy. She played *Hermione* in the first piece, and *Dorine* in *Tartuffe* in the second. The Odeon was the theatre chosen for this representation, as being the largest in Paris, and it must be acknowledged that the crowd found it still too small. The receipts amounted to twenty-two thousand francs, and the actress received presents to the amount of twenty-four thousand francs more. I have remarked already, in a former letter, on her performance of the first part. It is full of beauties, though occasionally marked by some roughness. *Dorine* has a certain resemblance to the other part, in point of satirical expression, and a certain haughtiness of spirit, which distinguishes *Dorine* from other waiting-maids. Mdlle. Rachel was amusing, at all events, though she showed that comedy does not suit her so well as tragedy. The general opinion here is that she failed; but I consider that judgment too severe. It is said that this young actress's income now amounts to two thousand five hundred pounds a year. Lucky she must be accounted, when it is remembered that ten months ago she was almost in the streets. I venture to assert, that if any one had then offered her fifteen hundred francs a year, she would gladly have accepted the offer.

Pigeon shooting is all the fashion here: large wagers are decided daily at the Tivoli Gardens in this way. Great improvements are to be effected speedily in the capital. After the resignation of the Molé ministry, the publick works were suspended, and great distress arose among the working population: one hundred thousand names were down to receive relief last week. A colossal image of Liberty, which now lies near the plaster elephants in the place of the Bastile, will be inaugurated to-day. The theatres are not open to-day to the publick gratuitously, as they were on the king's fête after the revolution. Louis Philippe lost part of his popularity by departing from his original practice in this respect.

A piece called *Léo Burckart* has been produced at the Porte St. Martin. It turns on the secret league established among the German students, to sacrifice any one who may displease them. Leo is a young political writer, who, though an ardent lover of liberty, excites their suspicion for having accepted the place of councillor of state. He discovers their intention to assassinate him, and enters their secret assembly in disguise, through the assistance of one of the members. The scence which then takes place is a most striking one, and produced a great effect. A young man is proposed as member; he answers satisfactorily to all the questions proposed, and is about to be accepted, when suddenly the officers of the crown appear, and seize on all as secret plotters. The neophyte, in order to save himself, proves that he is a spy, sent by the state to discover the mysteries of the tribunal, and demands exemption from punishment. He is then sternly informed, that all that he had seen, the guards, the officers, forcible entrance, and arrest, are all pretended! It was the last proof; and the parts were filled by the members themselves! He is a traitor, and must die! He is poniarded on the spot, and the meeting resumes its sittings. Leo is present at the subsequent proceeding, and hears who is to assassinate him. This person is in love with Léo's wife, and when he comes to assassinate him, he boasts of the favour shown him by the lady. Léo is about to attack him, when the wife enters and denies the truth of what he had just said. He is overcome with shame, and kills himself! The *dénouement* is a very lame affair; but some scenes in the piece are admirable. At the Opera Comique, *Les Treize*, a piece of Scribe's, with musick by Halery, has been brought out with good success. *Les Trieze* are a society of Neapolitan *roués*, who are joined together for the purpose of making conquests among the fair sex as frequently as they can, and thus sowing, as widely as possible, the seeds of disunion between lovers. The adventures of some of them with a young working-girl forms the plot of the piece. The musick is pleasing, but no more. Scribe has exhibited as much true humour in this piece as he has displayed polished wit in his other works. *Le Sauvrage de la Meduse* has been produced at the Ambigu-Comique. It is the work of M. Desnoyers, and the story is interesting enough. Of course the famous scene from the picture of the Louvre is introduced, and always with applause. The shipwreck is most cleverly managed.

For want of other matter, shall I tell you how Lamartine, the poet, writes his verses. He walks forth in his park, with pencil and pieces of paper: whatever ideas strike him he puts down on these. He throws them all into a box, and his secretary afterwards arranges them as he thinks best. They are then taken to a bookseller, and sold for one thousand five hundred or one thousand six hundred pounds a work. Lamartine declares that he never read *La Chute d'un Ange* until it had been printed many months, and then only at the instance of his wife. Some say that he intends to read it this summer.

REMARKABLE ANECDOTES OF DOGS.

The anecdotes given of dogs saving the lives of persons in danger of drowning, are so numerous as to be familiar to every person. "One cannot reflect on the innumerable instances of the love and usefulness of this animal, without being grateful to providence for having given to man a creature capable of many of those noble and disinterested feelings, which we are accustomed to appreciate so highly in our fellow-creatures, and almost to look upon as constituting the perfection of the human character." I beg leave to introduce to my readers an anecdote of a dog belonging to a friend of mine, but shall first, however, mention a story somewhat similar, related by an author of great respectability, regarding a dog belonging to a religious house in France. "At a convent in France twenty paupers were served with a dinner at a certain hour every day. A dog belonging to the convent did not fail to be present at this regale, to receive the odds and ends which were now and then thrown to him. The guests, however, were poor and hungry, and of course not very wasteful; so that their pensioner did little more than scent the feast of which he would fain have partaken. The portions were served by a person at the ringing of the bell, and delivered out by means of what, in religious houses, is called a *tour*; which is a machine like the section of a cask, that, by turning round upon a pivot, exhibits whatever is placed on the concave side, without discovering the person who moves it. One day, this dog, who who had only received a few scraps, waited till the paupers were all gone, took the rope in his mouth, and rang the bell. His stratagem succeeded. He repeated it next day with the same good fortune. At length the cook, finding that twenty-one portions were given out instead of twenty, was determined to discover the trick: in doing which he had no great difficulty; for, lying *perdu*, and noticing the paupers as they came for their different portions, and that there was no intruder except the dog, he began to suspect the truth; which he was confirmed in when he saw the animal wait with great deliberation till the visitors were all gone, and then pull the bell. The matter was related to the community; and, to reward him for his ingenuity, he was permitted to ring the bell every day for his dinner, on which a mess of broken victuals was always afterwards served out to him."

The following is the anecdote I refer to. A friend of mine, Captain W. Aug. Thomson, R. N., residing near Edinburgh, has a dog, both the parents of which were natives of Newfoundland. At the time I refer to (1836) he was, I believe, only two years old, but exhibited all the indications of great muscular power, and singular sagacity. He was considerably larger at that time than many full-grown animals of the same breed, and I always imagined his eye possessed a very peculiar degree of intelligence. One day my friend walked down to the sea-beach to observe the military, whose barracks are in his neighbourhood, performing their evolutions, and took the dog with him. All went on very well till the cavalry commenced firing, but such a sound was too much for the astonished Bounce, as the dog is called. Being quite a puppy, like many other puppies, he was not very willing to stand fire, and he therefore considered the best thing he could do was to sound a retreat. Accordingly, without casting a single glance towards his master, he *bounced* away homeward at full gallop, with his tail depressed, and in evident terrour. His master's residence is about a mile from the beach, and it appeared the dog ran the whole way at full speed. But as the house is in a garden, and surrounded by a lofty wall, having a gate which is always shut, and which communicates with the house only by a bell, it became a problem to our canine reasoner, how to get within the walls so as to be in safety. The gate he could not open, the wall was too high to leap; how then could he enter? He perceived at once his predicament, and no doubt thought of the bell he had so often seen his master pull, and the sounds of which were so often followed by the opening of the gate. Crossing the road, he ran up to a labouring man who was passing, and with all the gentleness he could assume, seized him by the wrist and held him, at the same time wagging his tail, and endeavouring to direct the man's attention to his situation. The man was at first, naturally enough, much terrified; but the perfectly gentle appearance of the animal prevented his fears from increasing. He therefore accompanied the dog across the road, and was led close up to the bell, which he at once perceived the animal required him to pull; this having done, he was no longer detained a prisoner, and the gate being opened, he related, in astonishment to the servant, the singular conduct of the dog. This little story is entitled to the highest credit, not only on account of the source I derived it from, but because I myself have seen the dog, when desirous of leaving the room, take his master by the wrist and lead him to the door in order to open it. All this I have been assured is solely the result of the dog's instinct, or rather, reason, as he never received any instruction. I trust that, although this anecdote has little direct reference to humanity in animals, I may be excused taking this opportunity of mentioning it.

DOMESTICK GREENHOUSES.

A plan has lately been discovered for keeping green plants in a fresh and lively growing state, in all seasons and climates, with a very small degree of trouble. As it must be quite new to many of our readers, though well known to professional horticulturists and men of science, I shall try to describe it, from a recollection of seeing it in operation in London in the autumn of last year. It is, I suppose, generally understood that greenhouse plants, among which may be numbered many flowering tender herbs, will not grow in the open air in a town, or even in a carefully-kept room. The smoky or otherwise impure atmosphere either kills them outright or causes them to languish, so that at the best they are poor stunted things. But, besides being deprived of pure air, the plants are not properly and regularly watered. Watering only now and then does not suit all kinds of plants; many require to live in an atmosphere from which moisture can be at all times drawn. In short, by the common artificial methods, it is often impossible to imitate the processes of nature so effectually as to keep a number of pet flowers and shrubs about our dwellings in a state of health and beauty.

The new and improved method consists simply in the use of a glass case for the plants. The case may be the size of a room, or of a box—it is all one. The top and sides of the case are of glass frames; the bottom contains earth in which the plants grow; the whole is kept closed, except at short intervals, when a small door is opened for any necessary purpose. The case may be placed in a room at a window full in the sun's light, or if the enclosure be large, like a greenhouse, it may be situated out of doors. The plants being set in the usual manner, the earth is saturated to a certain extent with water, and the case closed. Nature now takes upon itself the entire management of the process. When the sun shines on the case, the moisture rises in a natural evaporation from the earth, and hangs in condensed globules on the inside of the glass. When the cold of evening ensues, the moisture descends, and is absorbed by the plants and by the earth. Thus alternately rising and descending, the moisture in the case keeps up a proper and regular system of irrigation, whereby the plants are sustained in a state of great freshness and beauty. I am not aware that there is any precise method followed for admitting fresh air into the case, and am inclined to believe that this is accomplished only by the casual opening of the small door, or by slight crevices in the frame-work.

A gentleman, residing in the eastern and most confined part of London, has brought the growth of plants by these very simple means to an extraordinary degree of perfection. In one of his front rooms he has a case, about the size of a bird-cage, in which there grow a variety of plants, native and exotick, in the most lively state of health and freshness; and in a small back court he has erected a series of sheds, enclosed, and framed with glass on top and front, in which a prodigious variety of plants are seen growing in an equally healthy condition. On being conducted into one of these enclosed out-houses, I was struck with admiration of the freshness and greenness of the vegetation. From the ground grew tall exotocks, and from jutting stones, resembling rock-work, there depended mosses and creeping plants of divers kinds in a state of as luxuriant vegetation as if they had sprung amongst the cliffs which overhang a Highland lake. Yet all this was in one of the smokiest parts of London, in a confined back court, where a breath of fresh air could not at any season be reasonably expected, and where certainly the same plants could not grow in the open air, notwithstanding every care which might be bestowed upon them. What a triumph is this over local circumstances! Here is a gentleman of taste, who, though placed in a situation the most untoward, has it in his power, at the merest trifle of expense, to cultivate at least one of the branches of the delightful science of botany, and at all times enjoy the contemplation of some of nature's most beautiful works.

A special advantage of this mode of plant-culture consists in its applicability to the transportation of certain growing vegetables to distant countries. It has hitherto been difficult to keep plants alive on ship-board, in consequence of the great quantity of fresh water which they require. The expenditure of water, for instance, in taking plants from Great Britain to New South Wales, is so considerable as to be a complete bar to their exportation. This obstacle to the diffusion of plants no longer exists. By the above described method, growing plants are carried safely round the world, without requiring a drop of additional water during the voyage.

The woman that has not touched the heart of a man before he leads her to the altar, has scarcely a chance to charm it when possession and security turn their powerful arms against her.

LITERARY NOTICES.

"Concealment." A novel, in two vols. Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard.

Two interesting and well-written volumes vividly portraying the unhappiness and misery which invariably follow any departure from the perfect confidence and truth so necessary to the happiness of married life. Several passages struck us as very beautiful; we will give one or two, and then commend the work to our readers as much superiour to the usual class of novels daily issued from the press. How true is the following, which might have served as the motto to the whole—

"Many people can make great sacrifice for those they love, but few have the moral courage to love truth better than the object of their affection."

And again—

"How rarely does it happen, that the intellect improves the heart; but how often that the affections enlighten and elevate the understanding! How blessed is the union, when both 'work together for good,' and scatter over this life of sorrow the flowers and fruits of intellect and goodness!"

We shrewdly suspect the author of being a lady, from the following—

"There is, perhaps, nothing so engaging to some women as the capability in superiour men of enjoying their society as rational beings; and in nothing do the lords of creation make a greater mistake with regard to the ladies hereof, than in supposing that it is necessary to put off rationality to please the weaker sex."

"Picciola. The Prisoner of Fenestrello; or, Captivity Captive. By M. De Saintain. Second edition. Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard.

We are glad to see this new and handsome edition of one of the most extraordinary works of the age. The English editor justly remarks:—"The very soul of poetry breaths through this little romance. But the author of Picciola is a visionary, whose dreams are manifestly the result of a happy and wholesome frame of mind, not frantick slumbers haunted by nightmare and diabolism. Lowly and unpresuming as is the heroine of the tale, she has a claim to the protection of the wise and good; and we defy the most hard-hearted of criticks to set his foot upon the humble neck of "Picciola."

"Poems by Mrs. Follen," author of "Married Life," "Skeptick," "Well-spent Hour," etc. etc. Boston: William Crosby and Co., Pp. 192.

This is a collection of some of the most graceful and beautiful lyricks that have ever been contributed to the poetical literature of the country. No one can read "Sachem's Hill," "Her Voyage is at an end," the exquisite translations from Uhland, and the devotional pieces, which enrich the volume, without admitting that the author has displayed rare poetick talent. We mean, hereafter, to give our readers some liberal extracts from the work, but must at present content ourselves with the following gem, from the German of Ramler:

TO A FOUNTAIN.

Lo! this fount is flowing ever;
But the fountain prattles never:
Traveller! at this fountain stay;
Learn of it, with pure endeavour,
Good to do, and nothing say.

"Lady Cheveley, the Woman of Honour."

This is the title of a satire by some friend of Bulwer's, on Lady Bulwer and her late novel—tolerably written and severe. It commences with an appeal to the "Daughters of England" to spurn the author of Cheveley—

"With one acclaim,
Or share her matchless sin—her deathless shame."

It ridicules Cheveley as a literary production, lauds Bulwer, and inveighs against his spouse in a manner not more caustick than just. The following is a specimen:

One evening to his lonely home he bore
A wreath, like that immortal Shakspeare wore!
And o'er his solitude the echo came,
Of shouts of triumph, mingled with his name!
And we may deem, his eyes were full of tears—
How cold the triumph which no loved one shares!
Too proud to mourn, he sought his mind t' engage
With the cold woes of a fictitious page;
He turns the leaves—ah! has a viper stung!
His cheek grows pale, his noble brow is wrung!
Oh, monstrous! see, the mother of his child,
With blackest slander has his name defiled!
And o'er his noble heart a sickness came,
Not for his own, but for her deathless shame.
The coarse allusion, the indecent jest,
The falsehood half revealed and half supprest,
And vilest calumnies profusely poured
On the fond mother whom his heart adored.
His sacred anguish is no theme for song—
But heaven is merciful and truth is strong!

The following are the concluding lines:

See, from thy waning charms base flatterers fly!
Read! read! thy shame in each averted eye.
Behold th' inevitable hour is come!
When woman's scene of happiness is home!
Crushed 'neath the mount of curses, thou hast piled,
Weep for the home thy falsehood has defiled!
Yet list! the muse shall teach thee where to find
The only solace of the guilty mind!
Glad tidings greet the trembling heirs of Sin;
Ah, who has said, "compel them to come in!"
Oh, seek, thou false one! through long after years,
To wash this stain in penitential tears!
Then to thy husband's feet; if there forgiven,
May pitying angels plead for thee in heaven!

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

We are obliged to "T." for the goodwill displayed in his communication, but as we solicitously exclude everything of a controversial character from our pages, must decline it.—The remarks of "Sebastian" upon the comparative merits of Miss Shirreff and Mrs. Seguin, are not at all to our taste. Both ladies, in their peculiar spheres, are undoubtedly far above mediocrity. What satisfaction can it be to our correspondent to decry the merits of either?—"Here he goes, there he goes," is the exclamation employed by one of our contributors on hearing that Mr. Wallack had again sailed for England in the Great Western.—The allusion to the mustachios is too personal.—"A Fireman" should be heard, if his remarks were not so terribly inflammable. He is down upon the city authorities like—like, "a house a-fire."—We have never met with the caricatures described by "X.," but if his be a true account of them, the venders should, undoubtedly, be subjected to a prosecution.—We fear that we must postpone sine die, *the communications of* "Hotspur," "Zeta," "L. Y.," "A. B.," "Selwyn," *and* "Letitia Hardy."

THE NEW-YORK MIRROR.

SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1839.

THE MIRROR AND ITS PROSPECTS.

We are sure that the numerous friends and subscribers to the Mirror will not be displeased to learn that its prospects never were more cheering nor its support more liberal than at present. Our circulation, during the last year, has experienced a rapid and steady increase, so that we shall be enabled to render the next volume still more entitled to publick favour, both in the improved character of its contents and of its embellishments and typographical appearance. Owing to some delay in the execution of the last of the four costly steel engravings promised for the present volume, we shall be compelled to make up the deficiency by presenting our readers with FIVE, the coming year; but, in order that our engagements may be fulfilled to those whose intention it was to subscribe solely for the closing volume, we would state that all such may obtain a copy of the forthcoming plate gratuitously, by making their wishes known at the office.

Ladies of a certain age.—A lady of Marseilles lately brought an action against a gentleman for unhandsome usage on his part. The day of trial came: the court was crowded, and a very fair portion consisted of the sex justly immortalized by Milton as "heaven's last, best work." The usual question was proposed by the judgment: "*Quel age avez vous?*"—"*Dix neuf ans, Monsieur.*"—"You mistake, mademoiselle," interrupted her counsel, "you are of age." The lady, however, persisted that she was a minor, and in spite of the earnest appeals of her advocate, still adhered to "*dix neuf ans.*" Nothing could induce the fascinating descendant of Eve to pass the Rubicon of nineteen; and there being no proof before the court to the contrary, the complaint was dismissed, and the young lady in her teens was compelled to pay the costs. And how old do you think she was? Why, there are two eventful periods in the life of woman—one, when she wonders whom she will have; the other, when she wonders who will have her. She had attained the last.

The Moon-hoax eclipsed.—Mons. de Waldeck, who some time prior to 1836 spent three years in the province of Yucatan, and who has devoted much of his life to the study of American antiquities, has published the result of his researches. Many important and interesting facts are therein developed. He claims to have discovered the ruins of five large cities in Central America, which are almost unknown to the inhabitants, and the position of which are illustrated by twenty-two large plates. He has likewise a poem, which is supposed to have been written before the conquest of Mexico, when it was a great and powerful empire, in which the christian faith was preached by the high priest Chilam Ballam at least a century before the Spanish invasion, and in a language, the vocabulary of which is still in existence. This Mr. Chilam Ballam must be some relation, we suspect, to the illustrious Hum-ha-hi, who lectured at Pekin on steam-engines and railroads some twenty-five centuries before the discovery of America.

Sully's Victoria.—The full-length portrait of Victoria, executed by the distinguished Philadelphia artist, may now be seen at No. 155 Broadway. It is truly an exquisite work of art, and, from universal testimony, is the most faithful likeness of the British queen that has yet been painted. The engraving of this portrait, though admirably executed, does not convey an idea of the rare merits of the original. The colouring of Mr. Sully's picture is very beautiful and true—the proportions of the figure are exact, and the expression of the face combines energy with sweetness. An autograph of Victoria, presented to the successful artist, may be seen in the room of the exhibition. It is quite a characteristick scrawl.

Belles Lettres.—The Courier says that a gentleman was called upon a few days since, to decipher some inscriptions on a lot of bells, recently imported, and supposed to be of Spanish manufacture. On examination, he found that these inscriptions looked as little like Spanish as anything else, being apparently some very ill-used members of the alphabet, turned topsy turvy. He excused himself, therefore, from the task of deciphering, on the ground that though he read the Spanish language, he had not made much progress in the Spanish *Belles Lettres*.

Inductive reasoning.—A New-Orleans paper says that two individuals got into a political dispute on the Levee recently, when one knocked the other into the river. This is called a specimen of inductive reasoning.

Sidney Clifton.—One of the New-York correspondents of the National Intelligencer, a weekly chronicle of literary births, marriages and deaths, has the following:

"Mr. Fay, (secretary of our legation at Berlin,) is nearly out of press with a novel called *Sidney Clifton*, the scenes of which are laid, mainly, in this city. I have read a few chapters in this work, and think myself safe in pronouncing a favourable opinion of it, in advance of its appearance."

On this the Madisonian remarks—

"The 'gossiper' is wide of the mark. Mr. Fay is *not* the author of the forthcoming "Sidney Clifton."

To this the Commercial Advertiser adds:

"So much any one might guess, who knew that the title of Mr. Fay's forthcoming novel is the "The Countess Ida." But who *is* the author of "Sidney Clifton!" Tell us *that*, Mr. Madisonian, and we will give you credit for knowing something."

Next comes the Star:

"We could tell the Commercial who wrote Sidney Clifton, but we wont. We think, however, we may venture to say, without violating a stipulated cognomen, that it is from the pen of a gentleman of this city, well-known in Wall-street; who, notwithstanding his numerous avocations as a man of business, has found time sufficient to write a work of fiction, of which those who have read it, speak in the highest terms. We have long known the author as a graceful and flowing writer and a poet of the first order. We do not mean, however, to tell his name, nor to *insinuate* that "Sidney Clifton" is by either Prosper M. Wetmore, Goram A. Worth, Fitz-Greene Halleck, Edward S. Gould, or Jacob Harvey. The reader is at liberty to name any other clever man about town he may think proper."

The Star is facetious upon the subject of "Sidney Clifton"—a work which has recently made quite a sensation in the literary circles. We, too, could say who wrote it; but the Star should not "*insinuate*" that either of the abovenamed lazy gentlemen had found time to write a book. One rumour, however, we take upon ourselves to contradict: "Sidney Clifton" is *not* the production of our worthy district attorney, J. R. Whiting.—But who *did* write it?—Ah, that's the question.

Painting and criticism on paintings.—A recent writer judiciously remarks:—"It is a general complaint, on the opening of every exhibition, how few works there are worthy of notice; and the cry alway raised is, 'What trash! what horrours!' The truth is, criticism is much easier than execution; it is much easier, also, to discover faults than to appreciate beauties; and many take a pleasure in looking out for the bad, while they pass by the good in silence. Those who are acquainted with the various and gigantick difficulties to be contended with, the almost universality of knowledge, the poetick and exalted genius necessary for a successful prosecution of this wondrous art, painting, will rather be inclined to astonishment that *so many* great masters have been, and still should be found, than to complain there have been and are *so few*."

Jeremy Taylor on calumny.—"There is no worse devil," saith Jeremy Taylor, "than a devilish tongue. Were I a legislator I would enact a law, that every one who spoke evil of his fellow-creature, should be condemned to a fine, *could he not fully substantiate his charge:* and that the author of every slander and falsehood should lose his tongue. Then, perchance, there might be peace in Israel. But in the present blessed state of society, it is really fearful and heart-sickening to think how entirely one is in the power of these said tongues, what may not be propagated to one's disadvantage during absence, and how many reputations have been victimized during the babbling moments of a morning visit."

The Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review.—This work of Mr. Hunt is in press, and will make its appearance on the first of July. We have seen several of the proof-sheets, and we do not hesitate to say, that its typographical appearance will not be surpassed by any magazine or review in the country. Mr. Hunt has secured able and talented assistance, and altogether the work will, we are confident, prove every way worthy of the class of our fellow-citizens for whose especial benefit it is designed.

Catlin's Indian Gallery.—Catlin, the artist, who has devoted much time to the study of Indian character, costume, and physiognomy, has opened a large collection of Indian portraits, views of Indian villages, Indian dances, ball plays, religious ceremonies, buffalo hunts, etc., all tastefully arranged for exhibition in the saloon of the Stuyvesant Institute. The collection is a most interesting one, and worthy the examination of the publick.

A voice from Texas.—A moral lesson from Texas to the United States is really something new and amusing. The editor of the Houston Telegraph reads a long lecture to the citizens of the south-western part of the Union, who engage so frequently in furious and desperate brawls. This will remind every one of the sneer addressed by the pot to the kettle.

Origin of the word Texas.—The Cincinnati Republican has furnished an ingenious clue to the derivation of the word *Texas*. It is said to have originated in a couplet used by the earlier emigrants to that land of promise, *Texas* being a corruption of the phrase in the last line:

"When every other land rejects us,
This is the soil that freely *takes us*."

The Characters of Schiller.—We learn from the newspapers, that a work with this title has been published by Messrs. Otis and Broaders, of Boston, from the pen of our esteemed correspondent, Mrs. Ellet. We have received no intimation of the fact from the publishers, but will take an early opportunity to give our readers a specimen of its contents.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME SIXTEEN.

EMBELLISHMENTS.

Engravings on Steel.

I. VIGNETTE TITLE. Designed by *Weir* and engraved by *Durand;* being an allegorical representation of the present period in the history of this country - - - - - - 1
II. PORTRAIT OF MR. SPRAGUE, Painted by *Harding*, engraved by *Parker* - - - 1
III. THE PALISADES OF THE HUDSON, painted by *Chapman*, engraved by *Osborn* - - 185
IV. THE SOAKING MOUNTAIN ON THE MISSISSIPPI, painted by *Ward*, engraved by *Jordan* 265

Engravings on Wood.

1. *The Giraffes, or Camelopards* - - - 57
2. *Transportation of the Giraffes* - - - 65
3. *Old Polly Carey*, Engraved by *Johnson* 73
4. *The widow's daughter*, an illustration of the story of Old Polly Carey - - - 81
5. *Thomas Jefferson Montagu in search of a site for a cottage* - - - - - - - 89
6. *Marriage scene* - - - - - - - 97
7. *Lorenzo Da Ponte*, of Ceneda, engraved by *Adams* - - - - - - - - - 105
8. *Portrait of the Queen of England*, engraved by *Childs* - - - - - - - - 248
9. *Loss of the Forfarshire steamer*, engraved by *Anderson* - - - - - - - - 213
10. *Medallion likeness of Grace Darling and her father*, engraved by *Anderson* - - 327

MUSICK.

1. They have given thee to another - - - 8
2. A mountain melody - - - - - - 16
3. False one! I love the still - - - - 24
4. Oh! when wilt thou return - - - - 32
5. O, come, love, and dwell forever with me 40
6. The pick-nick—a new comick song - - 48
7. List thee, dear lady - - - - - - 56
8. Come to the garden with me, love - - 64
9. Erin! the tear and the smile in thine eyes 72
10. I dreamt last night of our early days - - 80
11. Rich and rare were the gems she wore - 88
12. As a beam o'er the face of the waters may 96
13. Take back the virgin page - - - - 104
14. How dear to me the hour when day-light 112
15. I've no money; so you see - - - - 120
16. How oft has the banshee cried - - - 128
17. Drink to her - - - - - - - - 136
18. Amilie's prayer - - - - - - - - 144
19. The exiles - - - - - - - - - 152
20. Oh! delightful hour - - - - - - 160
21. Silent, Oh, Moyle - - - - - - - 168
22. Love and the novice - - - - - - 176
23. Come! come away - - - - - - 184
24. Wake not my slumbering heart - - - 192
25. Fill the bumper, fair - - - - - - 200
26. Love is the theme of the minstrel - - 208
27. Come rest in this bosom - - - - - 216
28. Come, send round the wine - - - - 224
29. Polish dance - - - - - - - - 232
30. The angels' whisper - - - - - - 240
31. The Swiss hunter - - - - - - - 256
32. When through life unblest we rove - - 264
33. The American Waltz - - - - - - 272
34. We may roam through this world - - 280
35. She dwelt among the untrodden ways - 288
36. They chide me for my grief - - - - 296
37. Night closed around the conqueror's way 304
38. The Cumberland Waltz - - - - - 312
39. I've heard of the forest birds by day - - 320
40. The village bells - - - - - - - 328
41. Beauty, wit, and gold - - - - - - 336
42. Oh! cast that shadow from thy brow - 344
43. When the merry dance prevails - - - 352
44. Where Zephyr dwells - - - - - - 360
45. I love but thee - - - - - - - 368
46. The Greek Waltz - - - - - - - 376
47. I would not be forgot - - - - - - 384
48. To linger near thee - - - - - - 392
49. She wore a wreath of roses - - - - 400
50. Duke of Wellington's Waltz - - - 408

PROSE.

Autocrat, the, and the actor 11
Alligator team, an 27
Adam's anecdotes of the Rev. Zabdiel 30
Affected deafness 34
Aphorisms 43
Advice to statesmen 85
Actors 99
Adventures in the higher circles 109
Archaiological 118
Apollo Gallery, the 135, 142
Authors and Autherlings 140
Absence of mind 147
Autumnal view, an 158
Arab poetry 158
Actress, the 161, 169, 177
Absurdities of human life 162
Aparatus for publishing a newspaper 179
Alpha and Omega 189
Anecdote and gossip 200, 216
Adventures of a pair of top boots 209, 225
Actual scene after battle, an 210
Algiers in 1837 211
Asphalte cement 219
Artist in Rome, the life of 236
Animal Magnetism 257, 265, 273, 281, 297
Advice to the ladies 259
Adventures of Robert Leslie 286
Absurdities of a younger son, the 290
Atelier of Dantan, the 298
Advice of a father to his only daughter 318
Apropos of M. Frederick Joulie's novel 323
Appearances are deceitful 332
Abbé Chatel and his church 341
Anecdote of a Sicilian noble 346
Acted charades 348
Avaricious father 362
Anecdotes of Beattie 386
Brown wig, the handsome 12
Bowie knife 18
Beau Brummell at Caen 30
Burton on the Sieges 38
Byron 49
Beauties at sea 67
Breach of promise 38
Bravery 114
Buonaparte, anecdotes of Jerome 115
Burr's Private Journal 182
Bastile, the 187
Broken heart 203
Blind girl, the 251
Blanche of Rossberg 315
Bulwer's new play 349
British Queen, the 363
Bavaria, king of 381
Cries of New-York 11
Coloured duel, an uncoloured account of 35
Creation a catastrophe 50
Courtly hint 77
Coleridge and the press 91
Chapter of a work but little known, a 126
Conversation 139
Coquette, the 137
Crawford Basil 138
Children caught by an eagle 138
Cooper rs. Scott 164
Chapter on China 189
Coquetry of Queen Elizabeth 214
Chapter on ladies hair 218
Cashmere shawls, the yearly fair of 218
Convict's bride 221
Collections and recollections 235, 243
Countess and the diamonds 251
Chapter on dancing, a 258
Claude Duval 262
Conqueror, the, and the upright judge 275
Cobbler of Bruza 285
Couple of stray leaves, a 291
Chinese marketing 291
City of fires, the 302
Croly's Catalius 309
Choice of death 339
Coquette, the 372
Courts of law, the—the Sessions 374
Drama, the 7, 23, 38, 111, 142, 248, 256
Deceiver, the 14
Dismal Swamp, the 18
Durham's, Lord, dinner, at 27
Dissertation by a loafer 28
Drama, in the East 51
Domestick incident of the middle ages 53
Day with the queen's stag hounds 92
Da Ponte, Lorenzo, memoir of 105
Disappointed author, the 129
Duel, the 130
Dress, a few thoughts on 131
Directions for playing the piano 134
Dunlap, William 134
Dante 197
District school as it was 206
Do as I do, neither more nor less 211
David Doleful and Jeremiah Casey 229
Dress maker, the 238
Doings in Paris 253
Disagreeable people 371
Daguerrotype, the 380
Editorial notices.—Atlantic steam-packets; ancient Carthage; our old office; Mr. Sully's portrait of the queen; novels of common life; dyspepsia; Talleyrand; the author of my early days; the Strauss waltzes; Editorial abstraction; a pointed question; the American hotel; Rail-road from the Atlantick to the Pacifick, 7.—Our packet ships; Sanguinetti's paintings; life of Cardinal Chevereux; the Giraffes; animal subjugation; the Southern Literary Messenger; conjugal affections and regrets; the costly spectacle; Shakspeare's autograph; a pertinent inquiry; money rs. wisdom; West Point; realnies, 15.—Lines to Miss Tree; new hotel; slovenliness an attribute of the literary character; Mr. Paulding; Mr. Simpson; Sheridan Knowles; the new refrigerator; scarcity of ugly women: is there no offence in't; Victoria; steam; the springs; West Point, 23.—Saml. L. Knapp; pleasant situation; literary curiosity; Power, the comedian; an anchorite; Editorial changes; professional accuracy; Moore's description of Scott; a bore, 31.—International copyright bill; white cravats rs. black cravats; disagreeables; story of Lavater; sight seeing; statue of Washington; the drama in Texas; literary question and reply; Mr. Simpson, Mr. Cranch's studio, 39.—Paying for the hop; hot weather; Albion; American Monthly; flattering; instinct of the spider; Niagara; oldfashioned way of dying; titles; characters, 47.—Coronation; obituary; steamboats; donation for a publick library; Mr. Forest's oration; theatrical; dialogue in Broadway, 55.—Thos. Sully; new panorama; the drama and its traducers; correction; young ladies boarding school; Bentley's miscellany debtor the Mirror; literary celebration, 63.—Destruction of the New-York bastile; the milkman's yell; foreign theatricals; Park theatre; American poetry; Campbell's life of Shakspeare; new books; ignorance respecting the United States abroad; new parody; a rumour contradicted, 71.—New enterprise; Tremont theatre; disastrous year; what's bred in the bone; animal magnetism; labour lost; Lake George; the capitol; city gossip, 78.—N. P. Willis and the National Gazette; new bathing establishment; vulgar traditions; art of preserving health; Mr. Power at the Park; Chas. E. Horn; spurious champagne; American painters abroad; remarkable conflagration; cool; conundrum; take notice, 87.—The new English copyright law; Dawes's poems; a legal decision; the cadet ball; whirlwinds freaks; Madame Vestris; new musick; an offer; fact; National theatre; conundrum, 95.—Materials for a novel; rise and fall of the lakes; subject for a pencil; fine arts; fine engravings; Croton aqueduct; anecdote; Talleyrand's *jeu d'esprit;* Richard Hurdis; extract of a letter from Berlin; taking advantage of a circumstance; the land of strawberries, 103.—Discoveries on the sight of ancient Carthage; American writers abroad; omnibus driving; good news for novel readers; buildings in the Park; Talfourd; Yankee farce; Mrs Lewer's republications; fine specicimen of lithography; Willett's new school geography; 111.—Shakspeare at fault; what's in a name; Mr. Gregsbury on copyright; Van Amburgh and his huns; the author of Rasselas; statuary marble; prussick acid counteracted; perfume of flowers; distinguished visitor, 119.—Mrs. Norton and her assailants; an American poetess in London; songs by Boz; Mr. Henry Russell; theatres; asphaltum pavement; a startling theory; dramatick intelligence; Lockhart's misrepresentations; Mr. Horncastle; likenesses of Victoria; Soult and Wellington; the Oriental Annual; sale of manuscripts, 127.—Enchanted mountain of Texas; Bunker Hill; autumnal scenery; the ivy green; penmanship; new books; in press; on dit; Rooke's opera of Amilie; phrenological; a random truth; a melancholy case; female education; Dr. Channing; Yankee farces in London; ended in smoke; aphorisms, 135.—Statue of Byron; Van Amburgh's set-to with a tiger; office seekers in Texas; the fine arts in America; sub-marine armour; new French journal; Wilson, the singer; a female Nimrod; American publishing establishment in London; Miss Shirreff; a hint to steamboat captains; ladies in demand; march of mind; pleasant pastime; balsam of Moscatello, 14.—Mechanical ingenuity; an adventurous lady; poetry; female education; Henrick, the hunter; Sully's Victoria; an injurious rumour contradicted; arts and artists; misrepresentations of Miss Martineau; a graceful compliment; Westward ho! Miss Clifton; literature in Louisville; new musick by Russell; to our musical readers, 151.—The objectionable's refutation of Lochart's misstatements; foreign impostors; negro melodies; Niagara described by a native; scandalous; Mrs. Gibbs, 159.—The frailties of genius; new works; Mr Mitchell's address; honours to Thorwalsden at Copenhagen; an Oriental gift; Mr. St. Luke; Madam Vestris and his late majesty; Atwill's musick saloon; P. F. White; new musick; the Apollo; Hospital, 167.—Departure of Mr and Mrs. Mathews; a chronicle of Louisiana; portrait painting; the Dunlap exhibition of paintings; Chinese philosophers; Jerusalem and Niagara; lithography; National theatre; bad advice; bathing; professor Ingraham, 175.—The fine arts; a theory knocked in the head; scriptural anthology; medical lectures; magazines; London musical and theatrical chit-chat; new musick; Mr. Combe's lectures; Chas. E. Horn, 183.—British association for the advancement of science; Dawes' poems; Catherwood's plan of Jerusalem; dramatick guardian; Julietta Goddini; an editor's valedictory; musical; Christmas present; Elegaick poetry; New Yorker; charity, 191.—The author of Tom Cringle; the Adirondack; Bowery amphitheatre; drive up to the side-walk; theatrical; Sunday Morning News; law against dueling; monument to Mathews; the democrats' almanack for 1839, 198.—Protection against fire; origin of the name of the dahlia; Belvidere concert and ball association; plan for shortening legislation; Joan of Arc; musical source; theatrical apology; Merchants' Magazine and Commercial Review; Miss Alexina Fisher; stupendous steam-ship; fine arts, 207.—New year's day in New-York; holiday presents; launch of an iron ship; a serious consideration; Dunlap gallery; Thorwalsden; Mr. Catlin's letter; head-dresses; quack travelling; railways; theatrical; the lion tamer; American travelling sketches; sale of a city; Boz; a dear kiss; the National theatre; a bull taken by the horns, 215.—Copyright bill; Sully's portrait of Victoria; the unities; the respirator; the theatres; Crania Americana; sporting with danger, 223.—Lady's book; Croton waterworks; chiming of bells; new publick buildings; new theatre; theatrical; periodicals, omnibuses; Mr Simmons' lectures on the poets; new books; Mr. Dunlap's exhibition of paintings; Grandjean's composition for the hair; the churches of New-York, 231.—The fashion of hoops revived; Grace Horsley Darling; estimate of women among the Arabs; a young husband; theatrical; Bowery theatre; distinguished visitors; La Gazza Ladra; *on dits*, 239.—American Vespucci; Miss Landon; phrenology; the tulip mania in Holland; Macready and the London penny-a-liners; New-York Mercantile Library Association; to what base uses may we come; charitable institution; Victoria and the fashion of hoops; snuff-taking, 247.—Prospects of New-York; bachelors' ball; romance in the nineteenth century; the late Charles Gilfert; female jockeyship; the season; strangers; not bad; straw, 255.—The late gale; the waltz in New-York; legislation and the ladies; Wall-street; plain speaking; international copyright; literature and office; New-York and Albany rail-road; the Lady of Lyons; Paul Pry, 263.—Washington's birthnight; the St. George's Society and Mr. Sully; the claqueur system; progress of duelling; every one to his taste; a mysterious person; Pulaski monument; new source of amusement; more packets; a paradox; a good reason; shadows, 271.—Mrs. McLean; London chit-chat; published portraits; Dexter, the sculptor, 279.—Female house-breakers; how do you like our country; American actors in England; origin of Washington; who reads an American Book; woodman spare that tree; Epigrams, 287.—New-York and its prospects; international copy-right; speedy travelling; Shakspeare's will; new opera by Mozart; language without oaths; Mademoiselle Rachel; living in the west; musick in New-York; life of Mathews; theatrical; rights of authors and publishers; the season; original letter of Franklin; poetry and steam; a Parisian club-house; French dramatists; coincidence; rumours of war, 303.—The soaking mountain in the Mississippi; a caution to pedestrians; the Scott and Ballantyne controversy; Miss Martineau's morals and manners; married and single; Euphonious names; alarming; Ion and Romeo, 311.—Grace Horsley Darling; bathing establishment; you know; new musick; periodicals; on dits; the theatrical world, 319.—Grace Darling; North-river steamboats; Taglioni; the theatres; Simmon's lectures; Yankee characters, 327.—Influence of the imagination; statue of Victoria, by an American artist; Catherwood's panorama of Thebes; whiskers and long hair; original letter of Franklin; National; foreign chit-chat; Mr. Sinclair; new musick, 335; packet day; launch of the Decatur; new musick; American statuary; picture of a shabby genteel man; Sandwich Island criticism; phrenology and Mr. Combe; new periodicals; down with the dust; Ameli's paintings, 343.—A new commentator on Shakspeare; love and lunacy; our painters; the play's the thing; forest scenery; canine fashions; every one to his taste; dahlias; growth of France; shade trees; clubs; flattery; curious conjunction; fraternal liberality, 351.—Charles Mathews rs. the United States; diabolical attempt on the life of Madame Vestris; marrying in haste and repenting at leisure; the theatres; concerts; Zera Colburn; Hogg's garden; spring prospects; literature and office; Fay's new novel; Lozenge Warehouse, 359.—A glance at the exhibition of the academy of design; literary chit-chat; new buildings; theatrical; what shall it be; d'ye give it up; moving; tragedy and farce; musick, 367.—The New-York Gazette; Wall street and other matters; a second visit to the exhibition at Clinton Hall; improvements in the city; Parisian literature and morality; Boston engraving; Sully's portrait of the queen; the Amaranth; New-York Literary Gazette; Rooke's new opera; charm of dramatick representation, 375.—The United States reprieved by Charles Mathews; an old friend; Miller's paintings of Oregon scenery; bend to your oars; the son of the author of Bertram; Cologne and New-York; New-York theatricals; Texian theatricals; Brandywine springs; exhibition of paintings at the Apollo gallery; a female prisoner of rank; Chargé des affaires; a sanguinary proposal; mind your steps; American works in England; interesting to wine bibbers; an ingenious editor, 383.—Macadam and asphaltum; wooden pavement and stone; the theatres; court scandal; Balliston and Saratoga; pianofortes; a singular allowance, 391.
Florida, recollections of 2
Frontier incident 11
Florida, traditions in 75
Fiends, a night with the 76
First-floor lodger, the 82
Female influence 85
Fatality of a belief in fate 99
Facts and fancies 100, 109, 148
Facts and scraps 134, 275
Female equestrianism 170
Fine arts, the 182, 240, 248, 256, 320
Favourite maid of honour 185
Fat ghost 194
Fuseli 191
Fortune hunter, the 215
Fascination of the snake 214
Francis of Valois 233
Fashionable tourists in America 242
Fortunate attorney 250
Female heroism 259
Faith and works 259
Fairfax Tasso 260
Fanaticism in Brazil 283

Foreign correspondence 284
Facts and scraps 310, 322, 362
Fortunes frolicks 313
Finales—Comfort 322
Frenchman, the, in pursuit of information 323
Family of the great Sully, the 364
Florida scenery 366
Gambling, extraordinary instance of 30
Good living 43
Giraffes, the 57, 65
Gaietics and gravitics 58
German duel, a 67
Gamblers, the 107
Gouty old bachelor 115
Good advice 118
Grain of sand, the 139
General lover, the 251
Grave speculations 368
Great champion 273
Generosity of Cataline 291
Goody Gracious 305
Gay world, the 357
Great St. Bernard, snow on the 380
Human eye 11
Huzzas of posterity 50
Hamlet's grave 75
Hints to my epistolary correspondents 84
Hot weather 86
Horton, Mr., the misadventure of 122
Historical fragment, an 122
How do you do it 123
Humorous circumstance, a 170
Hadjee Meer Meerza 249
Heavenly shepherd, the 317
Hermitage Penha de Franca 325
Handel's Messiah 365
Handel and Mozart 386
Heiress and her lovers, the 387
Italian anecdote 18
Journey of the moon on a summer's night 20
Israelites on Mount Lebanon 43
Incidents of travel 49
If and his progeny 51
Incredible liars 51
Interview with Goethe 61
Incendiary, the 97
Jew of Hamah 98
Imperishability of the works of genius 99
Ireland 100
Jacobite, the 146
Is he rich 155
Imaginative writers 157
Indian composition 158
Indian tradition, an 201
Infelicitous names 293, 301
Judge Lynch outwitted 307
Job Dodge, or the stormy day 314
Inklings of ideas 318, 357
John Kemble's marriage 363
Improvisatrice, the, of Florence 382
Keo Kuk 26
Key of death 150
Korner 222, first and last love 242
King and troubadour, the 302
Love before pride 12
Life in Missouri 18
Lion, some particulars concerning the 19
Letters from under a bridge, 20, 28, 36, 44, 52, 60, 68, 76, 84, 92, 101, 108, 124, 133, 172, 180, 189, 196.
Look before you leap 36
Little bit of tape 42
Letters from abroad, 62, 133, 141, 148, 181, 213, 374.
Laurie Todd, letter from 70
Lynch, justice of Judge 71
Lover's leap, the 147
Life in Gotham 149
Lablache 150
Literary pursuits and business habits, on 154
Lion tamer, the 158
Love letter, the 163
Laughter, a chapter on 174
Lake fisheries, the 179
Labour of criticism 203
Lecture for the lawyers 204
Lee, Mr. Beverly 244
Love of country 251
Lesson for coquettes, a 259
Letter to a lady 266
Letters from Detroit 293, 326, 341
Literary patronage 306
Loss of the Forfarshire steamer 313
Lily and the rose 317
Life in London 350
Literary macadamization 358
Loneness of celibacy 381
Literary Miscellanies 382, 390
Last words 387
Man, the, who was too —— 3, 9, 17, 25, 33, 41, 49, 60, 66.
Martineau, Miss, golden age 13
Making a fortune 59
Monster of Lake Manitoo 74
Maratime ghost 75
Miss Martineau and Sam Slick 86
Marriage 86
Musical anecdotes 118
Mistake in Johnson, a 126
Mozart's habitation 131
Marcolini 150
Mozart 150
Magnetizer out-witted, the 170
Mental delusion during sickness 174
Malade Imginaire, la 179
Miss Management and Miss Fortune 195
Masqued ball, the 203
Mozart's requiem 203
Matrimonial insurance company 212
Miseries of prosperity 214
Merchant's daughter, the, and the judge 226
Mælzel's automaton chess-player 236
Morning calls 241, 274
Miser, the, and the Cantatrice 242
Milton 242
Managing a husband 246
Maxims and reflections 246
Musick and love 252
Musical sufferings of John Kriesler 257
Mercenary lover 283
Musick 304, 312
Macbeth's castle 322
Mademoiselle Mars 338
Mysterious melancholy of Mathews 355
Modern young gentlemen and ladies 365
Magazine day 366
Monument, a, to a mother's grave 378
National academy of design 6, 15
Napoleon 14
Nahant 27
New argument, a 34
Negro Musick 43
New-Orleans 86
Notes and notices 107, 371, 384, 392
New mania 158
Notes from my common-place book 190, 267
New-York and Boston 163
Nicholas Nickleby 214
Newspaper press 250
New-year in the country 282
New-year's day in Persia 323
New-England witchcraft 337, 345, 353, 361, 369
Original miscellany 8, 266
Opera, evenings at the 29
Our village 115
Origin of the pot-heads 116
Office of King's fire-screen 139
Origin of the name of Baton Rouge 162
Original of female names 171
Old tunes in the city of New-York 212
Old English writers 237
Origin of surnames 256
On dits 246
Origin of female names 331
Origin of Sterne's Maria 355
Old marquis, the 372
Pride of opinion 2
Passage in the life of Mrs. Melmoth 5
Plunder creek 9
Predictions 35
Pensive admirers preferred by the ladies 46
Passage in human life 50
Particular people 51
Present arms 52
Practical education 59
Polly Carey 73, 81, 89, 97
Popping the question 74
Police, Sketch 91
Pascagoula 106
Phillis Leyton 113
Pianos, the praise of 114
Parisian correspondence 117, 294
Pilgrimage to the holy sepulchre 121
Precocity 123
Phrenology 147
Poet in the country, a 149
Pleasures of shopping 179
Pococurante 205
Personal appearance of authors 227
Parisian theatricals 237
Passage behind the falls 238
Poetry of Charles Sprague 253
Paul Pliant 292
Prince Schwartenberg's fete 356
Pearl-street—the milliners' quarter 357
Particular man, the 358
Personal adornment of ladies 379
Precious stones, a few words on 386
Perverseness of women, the 387
Perjured gamblers, the 388
Quaker, the, and his insurance 86
Queen, the, and the lions 331
Reflections in a horse-pond 33
Rosalie 101
Rhetorical embellishment, specimens of 110
Rubens, and the Spanish monk 138
Rogue in spite of himself, the 145
Russian empire, the 156
Royal jokes, a couple of 196
Russian Almack's, a 231
Russia, the emperour of, crossed in love 238
Rowland for an Oliver 346
Romance of the newspapers 269
Romance of the harem 330
Reminiscences of a good-natured man 339
Robin Day 342
Rail-road by a novice 355
Russian and a Chinese town 371
Rector's daughter, the 385
Reverses of a season 389
Social intercourse 3
Steamboats 18
Steamboat in a forest 19
Sketches of persons about town 21
Scene in a western inn 27
Swimmer extraordinary, a 35
Signs of the weather 42
Septuagenarian, extracts from the common-place book of a 61, 85
Sorrows of Werter 73
Speculations in the west 75
Saint pump 83
Signs of prosperity 85
Slavery 86
Slick's speculation in pictures 86
Swearing 86
Stanhope, a visit to lady Hester 90
Splendour, the true enjoyment of 99
Simpson benefit, the 103
Socrates and Xantippe 114
Sam Wellerisms 118
Self-made men 118
Smith, Rev. Sidney 122
Scott, Sir Walter 125
State of the musical drama 131
Southern life, reminiscences of 133
Stray leaf from my log-book, a 133
Sufferings of Guadelupe Victoria 155
Singular adventure, a 179
Shepherd's dog, the 195
Speaking canary bird 195
Story of the picture 218
Suwarrow's laconism 227
Specimens of Welch literature 227
St. Nicholas society of New-York 228
Smith John, Letters of, 230, 277, 284, 300, 308, 316, 324, 340, 364.
Secret memoirs of the house of Austria 253
Stage, the 264
Seminole anecdote 306
Sneer, the late Mr. 316
Story telling 321
Smith, John 322
School incident, a 324, 329
Streets of New-York 329
Sketch for mothers and daughters 337
Somnambulism 338
Spirit of the English journals 347, 354
Some account of my grandfather 348
Single blessedness 350
Singers and Singing 370
Singular verification of dream 370
Sun dew, a Grub-street fairy tale
Soft answer, a, turneth away wrath 379
Some particulars of Goethe 381
Scott, Sir Walter, on the size of his brain 381
Tourist, from the note-book of a 29, 45, 69, 77
Things worth remembering 91
Thorwalsden 122
Thoughts and images 130
Treasure finder of Marseilles, the 141
Trees symbolical 150
Tour, Sharp 154
Topicks for thought 213
The three friends of Brussels 217
Talleyrand's jokes 227
Treachery for treachery 267
Thoughts on lawyers 268
The way they court down east 291
Travels in Arabia Petrea 330
Talking canary, the 358
The way they notice things in England 365
The three sharpers 371
Unsatisfactory satisfaction 1
United States like Thames water, 85, against the world, 86.
Unwritten philosophy 91
Unicorn 91
Uninvited guest, the 346
Victim of politeness 3
Virtues of tobacco 86
Van Amburgh and his lions 150
Varieties 299
Warm climates 4
Well turned 51
What we can do 86
What is money? 117
Wondrous harp, the 134
Wolfe, General, original letter of 149
Weather philosophy 156, 164, 173, 180
Wet day at a window, a 173
Wife of a literary man, the 195
Woman 283
Woman at the fire-side 283
Witty auctioneer and an old clock 307
Wife's revenge 310
Wilkie 338
When to leave off 363
War's alarms 377
Young lady, from the journal of 220
Yankee boy 355

POETRY.

A modest purple little flower 25
All flashes on me now 108
Afar in the desert I love to ride 115
Again thy winds are pealing in mine ear 188
Again, again she comes 203
A monk, when his rites sacerdotal were o'er 227
A man who had no rivals 246
A star has left the kindling sky 282
A nobler nature, linked with sweeter name 319
At our statelier homes 362
An anthem like the sound of many waters 363
A sprightly youth and maiden gay 368
Awake the song of peace 379
Blow, warder, blow thy brazen horn 39
Blest river I leave thee in sorrow to roam 96
Bright flowers are sinking 102
Bend on your oars for the sky it is dark 113
Blest land of Judea 147
Before the graces you disclose 324
Blest was thy ancestor with deathless fame 247
Cork, May the sixth, year ninety-four 16
Come, while the planets are shedding their light 56
Come back from memory's mourning urn 64
Charter oak, charter oak 233
Drink wine, my boys, drink rosy wine 6
Departed one farewell 59
Dear lady, all of loveliness and good 158
Droop not, brothers 236
Do I not love thee 274
Do you remember Mary 288
Dear Tom, if you would learn the way 366
Fresh in the morning is the living breeze 28
For ever gone, I am alone, alone 187
Fair and fair, and twice so fair 237
Forget me not 274
Fables for authors 314
Fled is the dream so fondly nursed 326
Fountain, that springest on this grassy slope 339
First of May, clear the way 350
Few columns rose when Rome was free 350
Gentlest and dearest dost thou love me still 60
Gentle waves upon the deep 232
Good day, my lords 300
Go leave that harp 300
Go, my messenger dove 316
Go, and forget that we have met 332
How happy are they who can find in reflection 30
Hillo, what, where, what can it be 35
How com'st thou by those gauds 72
His young bride stood beside his bed 75
How! paint Julia in colours 76
Hail sovereign of the world of floods 83
Hark while the ship is swinging 98
Here's to the land of the brave and the free 104
Hail to the merry autumn days 122
Her mind is gentle 168
Her eyes were like the sapphire of deep air 186
Haste, boatman, haste 280
Here's to thee my Scottish lassie 291
Hear me, Oh! hear now 353
How now, Pedrillo 372
How pleasant the life of a lord must be 385
How strange it is, so opposite a fate 199
He talked of daggers and of darts 222
How oft amid the sordid strife 259
It is not a light grief 11
If she's cold why complain 12
Into the silent land 16
I will not pluck thee from thy parent tree 37
I was born away down at Bangor 50
It is the dignity 67
I'm not a chicken I have seen 90
I'll give you a scotch my dear aunt 106
Just heaven, how fallen utterly our race is 138
I've looked on many a scene 139
I slew the chief of the Muskokee 158
I love thee, nature, I love thee well 163
I have money 171
I heard a sick man's dying sigh 209
It was deep midnight and the stars shone bright 217
I've frolicked a youngling 218
I mind me of a pleasant time 242
I wander by the brook's side 243
I feel them with their rustling pinions sweeping 283
I'm not a marrying man 290
In days of yore 296
I've heard that while Jove 297
I mind me of the happy hours 304
I've set my heart upon nothing 307
In slumbers deep the father lay 221
It was a gallant ship wherein I rode 328
Ivy is a bird 330
I had a home, where the weariest feet 363
In the young merry time of spring 371
Is there an unbeliever 387
I saw her on the vessel's deck 332
In a parlour gay on a summer day 336
It bursts upon my raptured sight 340
I knew her by her angry air 363
Little cupid one day 34
Light and smoothly our gondolas move 39
List to the dreamy tone that dwells 75
Love fills a blissful measure 254
Lady of England o'er the seas 380
My soul is drunk with gazing on his face 46
The watch-light of the lovers streamed 17
To thee most high the poet turns 15
Tell me thou ancient mariner 31
Here side by side the sainted three 55
There lived in Florence centuries ago 70
They kneel round the altar, the organ 74
The Rhine, the Rhine 86
There is a fearful spirit busy now 81
The northern wind hath blown 101
The deep affections of the breast 114
Thanks, there's no delusion here 112
The dark earth drinks the heavens refreshing 124
'Tis night, she sits alone 159
The voice of spring 144
'Twas night in the woodlands alone 148
They tell me gentle lady 149
Why, why such pressing haste, dear Charles 4
What! is it not the Lord Bernam, help 5
Wake, lady wake, the crescent moon 8
What in form she was 40
When Eve brought woe to all mankind 42
We are but two, the others sleep 43
Why dost thou come at set of sun 44
What's in a name 68
We met last June at Rockaway 124
Wan visaged thing 129
Wearies my love of my letters 132
Who rides so late through the darkness wild 139
When the fiends are round thee 156
There is now my peace of mind 164
Where the ivy vine is creeping 248
Write to serve a friend your name 384